

May 4, 2026

Dear Chairman Abney and the esteemed members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for Bill H8417.

As policymakers evaluate how best to allocate limited resources for mental health services, clubhouses offer a practical, recovery-oriented model that complements clinical care while addressing persistent gaps in our system.

Clubhouses are community-based programs for individuals living with serious and persistent mental illness. They provide a structured, supportive environment where members build relationships, develop skills, and engage in meaningful daily activities. Unlike traditional clinical settings, clubhouses emphasize belonging, purpose, and voluntary participation. These are factors that are essential to long-term recovery but often difficult to achieve through medical treatment alone.

Importantly, this model is not only well conceived but also supported by a growing body of research. Studies link clubhouse participation to improved employment outcomes, reduced hospitalization rates, and higher overall quality of life. These outcomes matter not only for individuals, but also for the sustainability of our broader healthcare system.

Clubhouses are particularly effective because they address needs that are frequently overlooked. Many individuals with serious mental illness face challenges beyond clinical symptoms, including isolation, unemployment, and a lack of daily structure. Clubhouses directly respond to these realities by fostering community, creating pathways to employment and education, and restoring a sense of purpose. These are not secondary concerns; they are central to long-term stability and recovery.

At the same time, clubhouses are not a substitute for clinical care. They function best as part of a comprehensive continuum of services, reinforcing the impact of therapy, medication, and other evidence-based interventions. This makes them a strategic investment, as they enhance existing services while helping to reduce costly outcomes such as repeated hospitalizations and emergency care utilization.

For these reasons, funding clubhouses is both a compassionate and fiscally responsible decision. By supporting recovery, promoting community integration, and enabling individuals to return to work and school, this model delivers measurable value for both individuals and the public system.

I respectfully urge you to support Bill H8417 and invest in a model that strengthens our mental health system in a practical, effective, and human-centered way.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



James DiNunzio
President/CEO
Horizon Healthcare Partners