

In Support of H8417

Dear Chairman Abney and the Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Mark Maragnano and I am proud to be the Clubhouse Director for Hillsgrove Clubhouse, a program of Thrive Behavioral Health Inc. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill H8417.

During my 33 years working in an Accredited Clubhouses, I have seen firsthand the tremendous and positive impact the Clubhouse has on the lives of members. As an evidenced-based practice, we know that a Clubhouse is effective at helping members return to competitive employment, supporting members in achieving their education goals, and decreasing hospital admissions. Clubhouse works for Rhode Island.

We know that Accredited Clubhouses help member achieve mental health recovery. This alone makes Hillsgrove Clubhouse a critical part of the mental health services of Rhode Island. While we are proud of this distinction, it is often the simple things that a Clubhouse provides that are the most important.

Hillsgrove Clubhouse provides over 12,000 nutritious meals for members each year, helping to ensure that our membership is food secure. Hillsgrove Clubhouse is open every major holiday, ensuring that our members always have a safe place to go, to be with friends and avoid isolation on these important days. Hillsgrove Clubhouse hosts the only Dual Recovery Anonymous meeting in Rhode Island, a self-help support meeting for members working towards mental health recovery and addiction recovery.

It is my sincere hope that you will support this appropriations bill and allow Hillsgrove Clubhouse to continue to provide these life savings supports to our deserving members.

Sincerely,

Mark Maragnano, BA

Hillsgrove Clubhouse Director

Good evening

My name is Mark Maragnano and I am the proud Director of Hillsgrove Clubhouse.

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to all of you in enthusiastic support of house Bill H8417

As the only Accredited Clubhouse in Rhode Island, we have the distinct pleasure and responsibility to serve Rhode Islanders from all 5 counties. Our membership includes 165 active members and hundreds of alumni members from all corners of the state.

Through written and verbal testimony submitted in support of this bill, I believe that the critical role the Clubhouse has in providing safety net services has been well stated. As an evidenced-based practice, we know that the Clubhouse model is effective at supporting members in their mental health recovery. Clubhouse works in Rhode Island.

I want to take this moment to talk about few simple ways that Hillsgrove Clubhouse is special. Hillsgrove Clubhouse serves over 12,000 meals ensuring food security for our membership. Hillsgrove Clubhouse is open every holiday to ensure that members always have a safe place to go, to be with friends and colleagues, and avoid isolation on these important days. Hillsgrove Clubhouse hosts the only Dual Recovery Anonymous meeting in Rhode Island, a self-help support meeting for members working towards mental health recovery and addiction recovery.

To fully appreciate a Clubhouse, we know it is important to see a Clubhouse in action. We invite all of you to join us at our Open House on Thursday May 21st, please drop by anytime between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM for a member led tour and a chance to work side by side with our members and staff. At 9 AM we will be recognizing on of our many employer partners, Old Navy Warwick and Garden City with our employer recognition award, please help us honor this valued community partner. Invitations are in the mail.

It is my sincere hope that you will support this appropriations bill and allow Hillsgrove Clubhouse to continue to provide these life saving supports to our deserving members.

Thank you.