

## STATE OF RHODE ISLAND



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March 17, 2026

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair  
House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

### **RE: 2026 – H 8040 – An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Zoning Ordinances**

Dear Chair Casey:

Please accept this letter of support for H 8040, which would prohibit a city or town from enacting any zoning ordinance that would place restrictions on residential recovery houses that are not applicable to other residential homes.

Recovery residences provide a sober, safe, and healthy living environment that promotes recovery from substance use disorders and related behavioral health issues. In addition to providing a safe and healthy living environment, the purpose of a recovery residence is to improve a resident's physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being. As recovery houses are residences, they should be subject to the same zoning ordinance provisions that would apply to those residences that do not provide recovery housing.

In accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 40.1-1-13(18), BHDDH is required to certify recovery residences either directly or by contract, and may only provide State funding to recovery residences which are certified by the National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR). NARR has established a national standard, a code of ethics, and a set of quality measures for recovery residences seeking and maintaining NARR certification. RICARES is the local NARR affiliate which certifies recovery houses for Rhode Island. Currently, there are 689 beds provided by NARR-certified recovery houses in the State, including 217 that were added in January of 2026.

As of January 1, 2027, all recovery housing residences will be required to have current NARR certification; however, currently, there are recovery residences that are not NARR-certified and may not be compliant with NARR certification requirements.

BHDDH respectfully requests an amendment to H 8040 which would limit its protections to recovery housing residences that receive and maintain NARR certification.

I urge the Honorable Members of the Committee to recommend passage of H 8040 (with the requested amendment) which will provide protections to recovery housing residences that are critical to support persons in recovery.

Sincerely,



Richard Leclerc  
Director

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing  
Honorable June Speakman  
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House  
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy