

Judith Woodruff Senate Bill S.219 January 28, 2014

Members of the committee. Thank you for hearing testimony on Bill S.219 regarding sober houses.

The Governor's top priority in his State of the State address is the drug and opiate problem in Vermont. He stated that it is at an epidemic level. Because of this situation, he has asked for help from all Vermonters.

In view of this, sober houses will certainly be on the increase as many addicts will be looking for housing while in recovery. It is our responsibility that these sober houses are the very best they can be.

Of utmost concern is the abuse of these facilities that are run just for profit and are offering little in the form of recovery. Our neighboring states are dealing with these very issues at this time. Being proactive could save us from some of the extreme difficulties that they now have.

To achieve this goal, regulations should surely be put in place along with other changes that the legislature could implement. These

are put forth in Susan E. Mehrrens, Ph.D. report to the Legislature in the Executive Summary. They are well worth your consideration.

We all want what is best for Vermont. Changes do occur, as they will, but we can still protect and keep our neighborhoods safe for everyone and have sober houses that provide the best resources and help possible. Regulation is the first step in this journey to insure the well being of all individuals.

Thank you.