

Hello. I'm Tracie Hauck of Rutland. I am Executive Director of the Turning Point Center of Rutland.

Please support the Recovery Partners of Vermont by recommending our requested funding of \$1.5 million to the DOC to expand our Corrections recovery coach program model statewide; implementing a legislative solution that will give inmates a strong recovery experience prior to release so that they can restart their lives with the support necessary to be successful, thereby diminishing addiction-induced behavior that can then lead to a reduced rate of recidivism.

The recovery coach model consists of three components: a monthly presentation open to all inmates of the correctional facility, two recovery groups meetings per week that result in certificates for residents who complete either or both programs (Making Recovery Easier and SMART Recovery), and individual coaching sessions for residents requesting private coaching. Participation in any or all three components is voluntary on the part of the inmates. The inmates sign up for group and individual coaching on sheets posted by the Volunteer Coordinator of MVRFCF.

As is shown on material submitted electronically, the number of men being coached increased exponentially over the course of the program, largely because of word-of-mouth support coming from the inmates themselves. 250 individuals have received group or individual coaching (or both) since 2016. Of that 250, 108 men remain in contact with the Turning Point Center of Rutland. This contact includes men who continue to receive regular coaching, those who may have struggles but use the Center as an anchorage and source of understanding and support, and those whose hold on recovery may be slim at times but who see the Center as the one ray of hope that they have in their lives. Connection to recovery and what recovery has to offer is our goal for each individual with whom we work.

I want to read to you an excerpt from statement by M J, a 40 year-old who began coaching at MVRFCF in January, 2019, was released in January 2021, just received a medallion for 5 years of continuous sobriety in January, 2024, and is still being coached by Turning Point Center of Rutland:

"[Since I've been out, the Turning Point Center program] has provided a lot of direction. It's given me a place to go and talk about the various issues that might arise, like, say, harassment on the job, or my alcoholism. The recovery coaching has been very beneficial. The people who do the recovery coaching are a very unique group of people. They're not scared to speak up on your behalf, provide assistance when you might need somebody to talk to. The people have been kind of a solid stone to lean on, you know, when you're tired or weary mentally, with the things going on in your life. It's been a unique experience."

We are requesting the House Human Services Committee to please include the \$1.5 million for Recovery Coaches in their budget memo to the House Appropriations Committee. I would be pleased to appear before you at a later date should you wish more information concerning the Turning Point Center of Rutland's Correctional Program.