

Jon Hoyt, Certified Recovery Coach, Turning Point Recovery Center of Springfield, VT  
RPV Member  
Request: Opioid Abatement Funding for Recovery Coaching in Correctional Facilities  
February 19, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations,

My name is Jon Hoyt. I'm a person in long-term Recovery and a Certified Peer Recovery Coach through the Turning Point Recovery Center of Springfield, VT, working at Southern State Correctional Facility in Springfield, Vermont.

Thank you for the chance to speak today. I'm here on behalf of Recovery Partners of Vermont member organizations to ask you to support the Vermont Department of Health's recommendation to appropriate \$1.25 million from the Opioid Abatement Fund to continue Recovery Coaching services inside correctional facilities.

We're part of a team of 3 Recovery Coaches working at SSCF for the past 2 ½ years. I have the pleasure of working there five days a week, facilitating groups, meeting 1:1 with guys, and helping them build Recovery plans before they are released back into the community.

A lot of the men I work with come in carrying heavy trauma, shame, and a belief that they've burned every bridge they've ever had. Many have never had someone sit across from them who's walked a similar road and come out the other side.

One of the core groups we facilitate is based on the *Houses of Healing* curriculum. It helps participants look deeper than substance use- into grief, anger, accountability, and self-worth. It's not easy work, but it's powerful.

I've watched men who wouldn't speak in a group start opening up about childhood trauma. I've seen them begin to take responsibility for harm they've caused. I've watched them support each other in ways that look like a real Recovery community, even inside the facility.

I want to share a brief story:

A man, incarcerated for many years of his adult life, reluctantly joined one of our groups. He sat with his arms crossed for weeks, barely speaking. Through *Houses of Healing* work, he eventually began talking about losing multiple family members to addiction and how his own substance use spiraled during that grief.

Over time, something shifted. He started participating fully. He wrote letters of amends. He built a release plan that included Recovery housing and Coaching.

A few months after release, he reached out to let me know he was still not using, working full-time, and reconnecting with his adult kids.

That's why this work matters.

Recovery support that starts before release makes all the difference. When people walk out the door with no plan and no support, the risk of relapse and overdose is incredibly high. But when they leave connected to Recovery Coaching, housing, and community, their chances of success increase dramatically.

People who receive strong wraparound Recovery services are less likely to return to use (RTU). And each RTU prevented saves the state money on emergency care, hospitalization, and inpatient treatment, the most costly and least preventative parts of our system.

This funding isn't just a line item. It represents lives changed, families reunited, and safer communities.

So I respectfully restate the request that you support the VDH's recommendation to appropriate \$1.25 million from the Opioid Abatement Fund to continue Recovery Coaching services in Vermont correctional facilities.

Thank you for your time, for listening, and for the work you do to support Recovery across our state.