

**National Coalition
of Recovery
Advocacy
Organizations**
(Partial List)

February 17, 2021



The Honorable Nancy Pelosi (CA)
Speaker of The House of Representatives
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Chuck Schumer (NY)
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate



The Honorable Kevin McCarthy (CA)
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell (KY)
Senate Republican Leader
United States Senate



The Honorable Steny Hoyer (MD)
House Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Patty Murray (WA),
Chairwoman
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and
Pensions
United States Senate



The Honorable Frank Pallone Jr. (NJ)
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Richard Burr (NC),
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and
Pensions
United States Senate



The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA)
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives



CC:
Tom Coderre, Acting Assistant Secretary
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
Administration
Department of Health and Human Services
Attn: SAMHSA-0930-AA22
5600 Fishers Lane,
Rockville, Maryland 20857

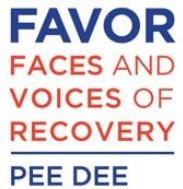
Regina LaBelle, Acting Director
White House
Office of National Drug Control Policy
1800 G St NW,
Washington, DC 20006



Dear Members of Congress:

We are a coalition of statewide and local Recovery Community Organizations (RCO)¹ and recovery community leaders writing to you to seek your support to establish a dedicated Center for Addiction Recovery at The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Similar to the Congressionally Authorized Centers for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, a dedicated programmatic focus on recovery supports is

¹ As defined in section 547(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290ee-2(a)), recovery community organizations (RCOs) are independent nonprofit organization that (1) mobilizes resources within and outside of the recovery community, which may include through a peer support network, to increase the prevalence and quality of long-term recovery from substance use disorders; and (2) is wholly or principally governed by people in recovery for substance use disorders who reflect the community served.



essential to equitably serve our diverse communities across all 50 states and territories. While there have been limited discretionary funding opportunities in the past, our work, which is vital for the development and strengthening of statewide and local recovery capital, has never been funded in a stable and consistent manner.

The COVID-19 pandemic is further exacerbating our national addiction epidemic. As physical distancing guidelines caused social and emotional isolation, our networks quickly adapted to provide virtual support and outreach, promoting health and community *without any waiting lists*. As unemployment rose, our networks provided workforce development, connected individuals to social support and education around PPP loans. As residential treatment capacity decreased and more individuals became unstably housed, our networks of recovery housing provided people with safe living environments. The kinds of activities that statewide and local RCOs engage in to foster hope, connection and purpose across our diverse communities has become even more vital given the twin public health emergencies facing America: COVID and substance use epidemics.

Time and time again, Congress has provided support directly to community-based organizations for Mental Health services. In the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, \$600 million in dedicated new funds were allocated to SAMHSA to directly distribute to local Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics. Additionally, the legislation allows for SAMHSA to administer 50% of the new emergency funding in the Mental Health Block Grant directly to eligible community-based organizations. Some of this funding has already been posted for RFP and will reach the intended use within months, not years. In contrast, the continued expansion of funding through the State Opioid Response and Substance Abuse Block Grants (SABG), which is welcomed and very much needed, has often been hung up in States' procurement processes and has not reached its intended use. This issue was documented by the Government Accountability Office in reports published in [March](#) and [December](#) 2020. The newly proposed House Budget Reconciliation package includes another \$1.75 billion increase in the SABG for states in Section 3052, but seemingly because Single-State Authority's (SSAs) have not be able to distribute large increases in new funds for intended use and in a timely manner, Congress is allowing them *until September of 2025 to procure funding intended for emergency relief*. This is unacceptable, especially given that SAMHSA has the ability to directly distribute funds to eligible community-based organizations.

Block grants require states to have consumer advisory committees, yet without supported statewide recovery community networks ensuring leadership, advisory structures become rife with tokenism. Funding, intended to support our efforts when passed through the SSA system more often than not go to large foundations, long-standing clinically focused providers, and academic institutions well connected and well poised to secure these funds yet with little or no insight into local recovery needs of communities.

The woefully under-resourced statewide and local recovery community organizations across this country stand ready now to respond urgently to needs of local communities and we believe allowing SAMHSA to provide a substantial dedicated grant program through a new Center for Addiction Recovery or a directly from the proposed emergency increase in SABG funding will realize far quicker and sustained results than waiting until 2025 for SSAs to procure these new funds.



We deeply appreciate your focus on these critically important matters. Please help us deliver this legacy of strong, stable funding to statewide and local recovery community organizations to save lives immediately and enhance recovery capital in communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan Hampton, Founder,
The Voices Project

Cheryle Pacapelli, Director of Peer
Recovery Supports, Harbor Care (NH)

Sean O'Donnell, Director of
Communications, Foundation for
Recovery

Daisy Pierce, Executive Director
Navigating Recovery of the Lakes
Region (NH)

William Stauffer, Executive Director,
Pennsylvania Recovery Organization
Alliance (PRO-A)

Samuel Lake, Executive Director
Keene Serenity Center (NH)

Janice Spinney, Executive Director
MWV Supports Recovery Coalition
(NH)

Phillip Valentine, Executive Director,
Connecticut Community for Addiction
Recovery (CCAR)

Keith Howard, Executive Director,
Hope for New Hampshire Recovery



Mary Drew, CEO, Reality Check (NH)



Richard Jones, Chairman
FAVOR South Carolina



Stephan Burdette, Executive Director, Plymouth
Area Recovery Connection (NH)



Frank McIntyre, Board Chair
FAVOR Pee Dee, Inc. (SC)



Mike Marshall, Executive Director
Oregon Recovers



Beth Fisher Sanders, CEO
HOPE Recovery (GA and NC)



Jessica Parnell, Executive Director, Revive
Recovery Resource Center (NH)



Isaac Waters, Executive Director
FAVOR Lowcountry (SC)



Patrick Brown, Executive Director
Thriving United (TX)



Johnny Hulin, Executive Director
Willie Carter Outreach Center (TX)



Steven Farnsworth, Executive Director
Florida Association of Recovery Residences

Bobby Brazell, Executive Director
Midlands Recovery Center (SC)



Robert Rice, Executive Director
FAVOR Piedmont (SC)



Michelle J. Lennon, Executive Director
Greater Tilton Area Family Resource Center
(NH)



Donna Marston, Parent Support
Consultant/CRSW, Donna 4 Support (NH)




George Morris, Executive Director
Jump Start Recovery Center



Mike Maddox, Executive Director
Oklahoma Alliance for Recovery Residences



Pete Nielsen, CEO, California Consortium of
Addiction Programs and Professionals



Wendy Jones, Executive Director
Minnesota Recovery Connection



Patty McCarthy, CEO
Faces & Voices of Recovery



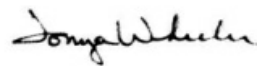
Zachary Talbott, President & Chairman National
Alliance for Medication Assisted Recovery
(NAMA Recovery)



Danielle Tarino, President & CEO
Young People in Recovery



Darrin Acker, Executive Director
Communities for Recovery (TX)



Tonya Wheeler, Executive Director
Advocates for Recovery Colorado



Tiffany Hall, Executive Director
Recover Alaska

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JB', with a stylized, overlapping structure.

Jack Brown, Executive Director
PEER 2 PEER WHOLE WELLNESS (TX)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RA', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Ashford, Executive Director of Unity
Recovery (PA) & CEO of RecoveryLink