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Utah State Legislature  
350 State St  
Salt Lake City, UT 84103

Re: House Bill 199 (Substance Use Treatment and Enforcement Amendments)

Dear Legislator:

As a former drug policy advisor to Republican and Democratic Presidents, and also as a scientist who has spent 35 years studying addiction and its treatment, I am writing you to express my support for H.B. 199. The bill proposes multiple sensible reforms that should improve public health and safety in Utah, not just for people who are addicted to drugs but for everyone else as well.

A key premise of the bill is that addicted people are often hard to engage in treatment. Sometimes this is about lack of motivation to change, sometimes it is about unstable life circumstances, sometimes it is about both. Given this reality, we have to use every policy tool at our disposal to promote engagement in the treatment services that can start people on the path to recovery.

The bill pursues this mission in multiple intelligent ways. Contacts between first responders and people who use drugs will be approached as opportunities for treatment engagement. Mobile treatment services will be used to reach neighborhoods that lack services as well as engage in treatment individuals for whom convenient access is a deciding factor. Harm reduction services will be expected to be pathways into treatment and recovery.

Recognizing that many addicted individuals require compassionate pressure to enter treatment and give up substance use, the bill offers a sensible use of therapeutic jurisprudence for drug-addicted criminal offenders. The evidence on drug courts indicates that such initiatives can reduce substance use, re-offending, and incarceration while at the same time respecting the rights and dignity of addicted individuals.

For all these reasons, I respectfully request that you support H.B. 199.

Sincerely,

*Keith Humphreys*