



PAUL TITTL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 25TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Senate Committee on Health

Senate Bill 901

February 17, 2022

First of all, thank you Chairman Testin and members of the committee for allowing me to testify before you today concerning Senate Bill 901 relating to grants to mental health clubhouses.

Mental health clubhouses are non-residential programs providing support and services to people with mental illness. These organizations are a very cost-effective way to deliver that assistance.

The bill before you creates a grant program for clubhouses to receive matching grants up to \$50,000 per Clubhouse per year. Total funding per year is limited to \$500,000 when the bill takes effect on July 1, 2023. The bill allows the joint committee on finance to supplement an appropriation under the passive review process.

To receive funding, must be accredited by Clubhouse International or a similar accredited organization as approved by the Department of Health Services.

As the number of people dealing with mental illness increases, clubhouses play an important role, providing assistance concerning education, housing, and employment. Clubhouses also offer an opportunity to build long-term relationships.

Strengths of the Clubhouse model include:

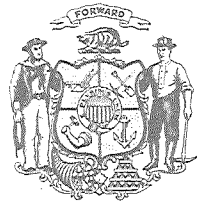
- A work-ordered day in which the talents and abilities of members are recognized, used and valued within the Clubhouse;
- Participation in consensus-based decision-making regarding all important matters relating to the running of the Clubhouse;
- Opportunity to obtain paid employment in the local labor market through a clubhouse-created transitional employment program. In addition, members participate in clubhouse-supported and independent programs;
- assistance in accessing community-based educational resources;
- Success to crisis intervention services when needed;
- Evening/weekend social and recreational events; and
- Assistance in securing and sustaining safe, decent and affordable housing.

The grant funding program in this bill will enable people to continue to receive help through these much-needed clubhouse programs.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today. I appreciate your consideration of this bill and am happy to take any questions.

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JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 901
Senate Committee on Health
February 17, 2022

Good afternoon, Chairman and members of the Committee, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today on Senate Bill 901.

This bill requires the Department of Health Services to award grants to Clubhouses, non-residential programs providing support and services to people with mental illness. To receive a grant, a clubhouse must include only members who have been diagnosed with a mental illness and are under treatment for the mental illness, raise an amount of money itself to receive a matching grant, provide activities and services to members on a voluntary basis, be accredited, have its own distinct physical space, and allow members to have the opportunity to participate in the administration and operation of the clubhouse.

As the number of people dealing with mental illness increases, these Clubhouses play an important role, providing assistance concerning education, housing, and employment. They are a very cost-effective way to deliver that assistance.

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2023, and the bill allows, if applicable, the Joint Committee on Finance to make a supplement using its passive review process for the purposes of providing grants to clubhouses.

Strengths of the Clubhouse model include:

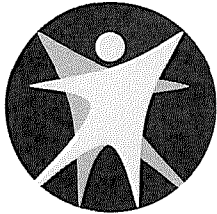
- A work-ordered day in which the talents and abilities of members are recognized and utilized within the Clubhouse;
- Participation in consensus-based decision-making regarding all important matters relating to the running of the Clubhouse;
- Opportunities to obtain paid employment in the local labor market through a Clubhouse-created Transitional Employment Program. In addition, members participate in Clubhouse-supported and Independent programs;
- Assistance in accessing community-based educational resources;
- Access to crisis intervention services when needed;
- Evening/weekend social and recreational events; and
- Assistance in securing and sustaining safe, decent and affordable housing.

The grant funding program in this bill will enable people to continue to receive help through these much-needed Clubhouse programs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

29TH SENATE DISTRICT

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Tony Evers, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary-Designee

TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Health

FROM: HJ Waukau, Legislative Director Wisconsin Department of Health Services

DATE: February 17, 2022

RE: SB 901 relating to: grants to mental health clubhouses.

The Department of Health Services (DHS) would like to submit written testimony for information only on Senate Bill 901 (SB 901) regarding the requirement of DHS to award grants to mental health clubhouses. SB 901 requires DHS to award no more than \$500,000 per fiscal year in grants to clubhouses. Clubhouses are defined as nonresidential rehabilitation programs that provide supports and services to individuals who have a mental illness, but do not directly provide treatment or medical care for medical illnesses. Clubhouses eligible for the grants would need to meet a series of criteria specified in the bill.

SB 901 creates a grant program under Wis. Stat. § 46.48 which is currently funded by an existing GPR appropriation designated for other statutorily approved grant programs such as: peer run respite centers, opioid treatment centers, and treatment alternatives programming. However, SB 901 does not appropriate any additional funds for the mental health clubhouse grants. Rather, SB 901 specifies that if applicable, the Joint Committee on Finance (JCF) may make a supplemental appropriation for the purpose of the grant program from moneys appropriated to it, but it does not appropriate additional funds to JCF for this purpose. Coincidentally, the funding for the grant program created by SB 901 would not be able to be dispersed until after the conclusion of the current 2021-23 biennium. This effectively requires DHS to commit funding to a new program outside of the current biennium without a corresponding appropriation. DHS would be unable to implement the grant program using current funding in Wis. Stat. § 20.435(5)(bc) without compromising funding for other statutorily designated grant programs.

Additionally, there are currently only five clubhouses in Wisconsin. The terms of SB 901 limit grants to a clubhouse for a maximum of \$50,000 per clubhouse. Based on the number of currently eligible grantees it is likely that only \$250,000, or half of the amount listed in the bill, would be granted out in any given fiscal year. SB 901 is silent on whether any unused funds would remain in the designated appropriation, or be required to be lapsed back to the general fund. Dedicated funding for the grant program in the bill would ensure that DHS is able to meet the stated intent of funding clubhouses in Wisconsin. Further, additional staffing resources for DHS would be required to administer the grants, but are not accounted for in SB 901.

DHS thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide written testimony for information only and we offer ourselves as a resource for Committee members for any follow up or additional information that may be needed.