

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY for the HEALTH POLICY COMMITTEE  
Michigan House of Representatives**

**of Andrew Galbraith, Secondary Distributor for Southeast, Michigan  
In Support of HB 5178 and HB5179**

Thank you, Madame Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to submit written testimony. My name is Andrew Galbraith, and I'm writing to express my support for House Bill 5178 and 5179. Specifically, I urge the committee to:

- Bring the bill to the floor as soon as possible, and
- Approve the language which protects second- and third-party distribution.

I'm currently a secondary distributor for several SSP's, and also a volunteer with Street Outreach Teams, a street medicine team in Detroit. With support from agencies such as ACCESS, Street Outreach Teams, SOOAR, Detroit Recovery Project, and HARM:LESS from FAN, I'm able to bring harm reduction supplies and medical care to about 80 people a week. In the last three years I have put roughly 780,000 syringes and 15,000 doses of Narcan on the street, as well as many other risk reduction supplies. Although syringe service programs in Michigan perform life-saving work, because of their various HR and administrative policies their reach can be limited at times, at which point a secondary distributor can be more effective. When a program participant desperately texts me at 10PM because everyone in their peer group is overdosing off an unexpectedly strong batch of opioids and they have run out of naloxone, as an independent person not bound by the policies of an agency, I can take that person naloxone anytime anywhere. When someone calls me at night asking for a ride to a hospital or treatment, I can take them.

I have outreached as far north as Flint, and as far south as Ann Arbor. I outreach on weekends, and before and after my day job. There is not a limit to when and where I can help someone. Our SSP's in Michigan all do great work, but if I were an employee of any of those groups a lot of the people I see would be left without access to supplies. At the same time those SSP's support me and allow me to do what I do. I do harm reduction work because I know the effect reusing syringes can have on a person's health. Working with a street medicine team has opened my eyes to how common systemic infection is. For the people I bring supplies to, it's significant a danger as overdose. People die because of lack of access to clean syringes. I do what I do because I feel like I am doing the right thing. I feel blessed to be in a situation where I'm supported and able to do what I do. I am a little piece of the big picture, and I'm content to do my part. Carrying paraphernalia does put me at risk though. Currently the only thing that stands between me and a jail cell is police officer discretion. **For this reason, I urge you to consider expanding the language in this bill to include secondary distributors and third parties.**

Sincerely,

Andrew Galbraith