

MARN

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MISSOURI RECOVERY NETWORK

Silence Hurts. . . Step Up. . . Speak Out!

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Participation is the Key to Success!

Submitted by Brenda Schell, MRN Project Director

MARN has been quite busy! With the 2008 legislative session in full swing, MRN has set 2008 Legislative Priorities. These priorities are printed in this newsletter and can also be found on the MRN website. MRN members provided testimony in support of HB 1408 on March 11th. This bill, sponsored by Rep. Bill Deeken, would create the Fund for the Reduction of Alcohol-Related Problems and Underage Drinking to be used for prevention, treatment, and recovery of alcohol-related problems and alcohol-related traffic safety. To follow legislation pertaining to substance abuse prevention, addiction, treatment, and recovery issues, be sure to read the Capitol Reports posted on the MRN website under legislation. Another report will soon be coming your way.

MRN's first Advocacy Day is scheduled for Wednesday, April 30, at the State Capitol from 12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. This event was planned to provide a united voice speaking out about issues affecting policy pertaining to addiction, treatment and recovery. I encourage those wishing to participate to schedule appointments with your elected officials between the hours of 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. to discuss issues affecting those trying to achieve and maintain recovery. Your comments to policy makers have the power to change public attitudes and policy dealing with these concerns.

MRN's Recovery Rally is scheduled for Thursday, May 1, at the Truman Hotel from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. This annual rally was developed to celebrate recovery from addiction, reduce the stigma associated with addiction, educate about the different paths to recovery, gain knowledge and expertise in advocacy efforts and encourage those in recovery to STEP UP and SPEAK OUT about their recovery success, giving others hope and confidence to overcome their addiction. The rally has been approved for 6 CEUs by the MSAPCB.

To register for either or both events, you may do so at www.morecovery.org. To view the full brochure, visit <http://www.morecovery.org/pdf/AdvocacyRallyBroch08.pdf>. If your organization or facility is interested in sponsoring this event, please contact me at 573-635-6669.

**Check out our website
www.morecovery.org**

MRN Legislative Priorities for 2008

As of March 24, 2008

Bill Number/Sponsor	Summary	Support; Not support; Monitor
HB 1408 Deeken	Establishes fund for reduction of alcohol-related problems.	Support
HB 1406 Deeken; SB 881 Green	Establishes a drunk driving memorial sign program.	Support
SB 855 Coleman	Adds counseling services under MO HealthNet.	Support
SB 764 Wilson	Modifies eligibility requirements for food stamp assistance.	Support
HB 1586 Baker HB 1781 Skaggs	Prohibits the possession or consumption of alcohol in the State Capitol or on the State Capitol grounds.	Support
HR 1424 FEDERAL	Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.	Support
HB 1409 Deeken	Ignition Interlock Restricted Driver's Licenses	Monitor
HB 1423 St. Onge	Ignition Interlock Devices	Monitor
SB 747 Ridgeway	Prohibits the use or possession of alcoholic beverage vaporizers and modifies provisions relating to underage drinking	Monitor
SB 741 Bray	Allows small employers to obtain medical coverage through the Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan	Monitor
SB 1063 Koster	Creates the Missouri Methamphetamine Project	Monitor
HB 1530 Smith, Jones, <i>etal</i> SB 766 Goodman	HB 1530 —Allows criminal charges to be filed against a mother who intentionally used or ingested an illegal controlled substance while she was pregnant which resulted in harm to her unborn child. SB 766 —Criminalizes prenatal drug or alcohol use	Not support
HB 1507 Hughes	Eliminates the payment of an intervention fee as a condition of parole.	Not support
HB 1323 Sater	Methamphetamine Offender Registry	Not support
SB 861 Shoemyer	Redefines the term "intoxication-related traffic offense".	Not support
SB 736 Bartle	Requires school districts to adopt policies for the testing of student athletes for the unlawful use of a controlled substance, including but not limited to anabolic steroids.	Not support
HB 1830 Young	Changes the law regarding the classification of marijuana as a controlled substance and legalizes the use of marijuana for medical purposes.	Not support

Recovery Voices Count Campaign

MRN has been chosen by FAVOR (Faces and Voices of Recovery) to participate in a special project entitled *Recovery Voices Count*. This project is a national movement which will build recognition of the recovery community as a constituency of consequence. This project was developed to help the growing number of recovery community organizations and recovery advocates across the country get involved in nonpartisan voting activities so their voices can be heard at the local, state, and national levels. The goals for this project are: to ensure equitable and effective addiction treatment and recovery coverage in all public and private health care plans; endorse addiction prevention, early intervention, and recovery as an investment in America's future; support policies that promote long-term recovery from addiction as integral to overall health; and support people in long-term recovery who often are discriminated against when seeking jobs, housing, and insurance.

The project has 3 parts:

Voter Registration- This part of the project will help individuals take the first step in civic participation. Every individual, family member and friend/ally of recovery that is eligible to vote needs to be registered and we will assist with this.

Voter Education- Education about issues is a powerful predictor of civic engagement. The more people know, the more likely it is they will participate in civic affairs. We will help provide individuals with reliable information about the issues they care about and candidates' positions on those concerns.

Voter Participation- We will engage and encourage MRN members and others in actually exercising their right to vote.

More information regarding *Recovery Voices Count* will be posted on the MRN website in the near future. If you would like to become more involved in this project, please contact Rhonda Flynn at rflynn@actmissouri.org or 573-635-6669. Participation is KEY to the success of this event!

MRN invites you to attend and get involved in the many recovery events and activities taking place! If you are not currently a MRN member, we encourage you to join. You may join online at www.morecovery.org. *Together we CAN make a difference.*

MRN "Freshens Up" Vision and Mission

After much thought and consideration, the MRN Council has revised the MRN vision and mission statements to reflect the organizations thoughts and beliefs.

Our Vision

All Missourians with alcohol and/or other drug use disorders are assured prompt, equal access to treatment and recovery support services allowing them to achieve and sustain recovery and be accepted as valued members of their communities.

Our Mission

The Missouri Recovery Network mobilizes those in recovery, their families and allies to help end discrimination, broaden social understanding about addiction and recovery, reduce barriers to and support recovery, and achieve an improved public response to alcohol and other drug use disorders as a public health crisis.

SAVE THESE DATES!

Advocacy Day

Wednesday, April 30, 2008

State Capitol, Jefferson City

12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The purpose of this first time event is to provide a united voice speaking out about issues affecting policy pertaining to addiction, treatment, and recovery. We encourage you to participate to help shape policies, attitudes, and opportunities for all Missourians in recovery. It is our collective strength that will ensure our success!

Recovery Rally

Thursday, May 1, 2008

Truman Hotel, Jefferson City

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

MRN invites you to attend our third annual recovery rally. This annual rally was developed to celebrate recovery from addiction, work to reduce the stigma, educate on the many paths of recovery, provide techniques on how to advocate for more and easier access to effective addiction treatment and recovery support services, and encourage those in recovery to STEP UP and SPEAK OUT about their own recovery.

To register for either or both events, go to www.morecovery.org/events.asp. To view the agenda and full brochure, visit www.morecovery.org/pdf/AdvocacyRallyBroch08.pdf.

The *MRN Newsletter* is a production of the Missouri Recovery Network. Contents may be reproduced to further take action toward recovery from substance and drug addiction. Contents are not official statements of the Missouri Recovery Network. The *MRN Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Missouri Recovery Network. The Missouri Recovery Network works in partnership with ACT Missouri and the Missouri Department of Mental Health's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

House Approves Bill on Mental Health Parity

After more than a decade of struggle, the U.S. House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to approve the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, H.R. 1424 recently. The vote was 268-148.

The historic vote came on the heels of a national mobilization in support of the bill by people afflicted with mental illness and those in recovery along with their families, friends and allies. There was a tremendous outpouring of calls to members of the House at critical junctures in the process. Action alerts have been sent out from Faces & Voices of Recovery (and passed on by MRN) urging advocates to take action and call...and you did! Thanks for all your advocacy efforts.

Here's a statement from FAVOR's board chair, Merlyn Karst about the victory: "The Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007 is the right

solution to ending insurance discrimination facing people with alcohol and drug problems...." said Merlyn Karst. "We urge the Congress to come together and hammer out the differences between the strong bill that the House passed and the Senate-passed version of the "parity" legislation, S. 558. Now the hard work of addressing the disparities in the two versions begins. The American public is desperate for the strongest possible bill to reach the White House this year to end the discrimination that keeps people with addiction from getting the help they need."

MRN will keep you posted on the next steps as they become available.

—Editor's note:

This victory was due to people taking action and calling their legislators. Your voice DOES make a difference.

It is our collective strength that will ensure our success!

