



**MOAR, Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery**  
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## **SPEAKING OUT FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY!**

*MOAR is a statewide recovery community organization activating its mission to organize recovering individuals, families, and friends into a collective voice educating the public about the value of recovery from alcohol and other addictions. We envision a society where addiction is treated as a significant public health issue and recovery is recognized as valuable to our communities.*

We are working in coalition with allied organizations to implement strategies to increase access to treatment and recovery services, as we celebrate the value of recovery. Did you know?

- *Massachusetts ranks among the top 5% of states for alcohol and drug use among adults and youth (NSUDH)*
- *From 2001-2004, the MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services funding was cut by nearly 50%.*

### **Now Thanks to The 2008 Leadership of**

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse Committee Chaired by Representative Ruth Balser and Senator Gale Candaras, Assistant Majority Leader Senator Tolman; Senate President Therese Murray; House Speaker Salvatore DiMasi; The Ways and Means Committees; MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services with MOAR, Coalitions, Parent Groups and You! Your Voices are Being Heard!**

- *2009 MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services Budget Makes History with More Funding Than Ever!*

***Then Economy Falls, Executive Branch Executes \$8 Million + Cut Cuts Hurt; But Mostly Hit Projects Not Yet Up and We Need To Prevent Future Cuts, & Keep These Services***

### **Speaking Out for Addiction Recovery Positive Outcomes**

- *3Three Recovery High Schools in Springfield, Boston, and Beverly with graduations*
- *2 Statewide Adolescent Crisis Stabilization Unit—a 25 bed detox with follow up Worcester & Brockton*
- *A new male Section 35 rehabilitation unit for men, who are civilly committed, is on the horizon*
- *Highpoint Tranquility Inn New Bedford, Women's Section 35, has been at full capacity for over 2 years*
- *More alcohol and other drug education in public schools*
- *Alcohol and other drug screening, treatment referral in 7 hospital emergency rooms and beyond!*
- *Approximately \$2.7 million more in long-term, residential, addiction recovery service contracts*
- *6 Regional Clinical Support Services, ( rehab for post detox or that does not require medical detox)*
- *6 Regional Recovery Support Centers with a variety of support services are in the plans*
- *Office of Youth and Young Adult Services with Family Involvement*

### **What Still Hurts and What Can Help**

- **2008 Overdose Deaths manifest to over 645 lives and NARCAN is being piloted to keep people alive and Proposed policies, with state and federal funded coalitions formed to make the following possible**
  - *Strategic Prevention Framework to address drug overdoses as well as underage drinking*
  - *Improved prescription monitoring*
  - *Community, parent and teacher education*
  - *Safer storage of prescription medication*
  - *A statewide disposal program for unused pills*
  - *Increased Access Throughout The Continuum of Care .....with MOAR to do in 2009 for 2010..*

### **We can Prevent Budget Cuts By Uniting for Increased Revenues for Services and Improved Policies**

MOAR is a MA Coalition for Addiction Services member, collaborating to prevent further budget cuts to substance abuse services, as a well as a United We Stand Member regarding any public health cut.

- \* *Educate your elected legislators about how service cuts effect your family, community, and you.*
- \* *Let them know you support improving state revenue resources to prevent budget cuts.*

## ***Positive Policy Outcome for 2008!***

- **Insurance Parity for Addiction Treatment – Rep Ruth Balser championed & Senator Tolman Sponsored, Signed By Governor Patrick and Your Voices Made Parity a Reality!**

*(Goes into Effect – July 2009)* provides same levels of health insurance coverage for addiction (children, family, adult) for substance use disorder, (as well as autism, eating disorders, and post traumatic stress.) with other diseases. Massachusetts should save \$6 to \$25 million annually under parity. This measure should help to end insurance discrimination..

### ***You Can Help to Make The Following a Reality for 2009-2010***

- **Provide a Substance Abuse Health Protection Fund – (Senator Marian Walsh is lead sponsor)**

The Health Protection Fund would be managed by MA Department of Public Health to assure treatment across state agencies covering corrections, social services, education, prevention, plus driver and alcohol education programs. The fund will be financed by lifting the current exemption on the 5 % sales tax on the retail sale of alcohol beverages for off premises consumption. This act estimates to realize at least \$80 million in one year for state revenue.

- **Massachusetts 911 Good Samaritan Bill – (Senator Steven Tolman is lead sponsor)**

The 911 Good Samaritan Bill provides limited immunity from drug possession charges and prosecution when a drug-related overdose victim or a witness to an overdose seeks medical attention. Therefore, this law will help reduce drug-related overdose deaths by removing barriers to calling 911.

- **Seek to Remove Alcohol Beverage Advertising from Public Transit - (Rep Martin Walsh is lead sponsor)**

This bill seeks to remove alcohol beverage advertising from public transit due to the attraction it gives to the public, and thus, is a deterrent to thinking through consequences of alcohol use. The MBTAAA, MA Banning Together Against Alcohol Advertising is this proposal's moving force.

- **Provide Insurance Reimbursement for Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor I, (Senator Steven Tolman and Rep Martin Walsh are lead sponsors)**

This would require insurers to reimburse for the services of a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor I. Through insurance reimbursement, it will permit individuals and their families who suffer from, or are affected by alcohol and other drug abuse or addiction, to choose the human services professional most appropriate for their needs. (MOAR & MAADAC, (MA Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors) are taking the lead on this issue)

- **Provide Improved Access to Employment, Education and Housing with CORI Reform (Senator Harriet Chandler and Rep Elizabeth Malia are lead sponsors)**

This measure would reduce barriers to employment and housing for people who have a favorably ending case (e.g., not guilty), and/or are demonstrating positive, changed lives. The goal is to:

- Implement automatic sealing of favorably ending cases (e.g., not guilty)
- Require that only convictions and open cases be reported to non-law enforcement entities
- Prohibit employers from discriminating against CORI subjects based solely on a CORI
- Reduce length of time required to seal misdemeanor to 3 years and felony records to 7 years

MARC, (MA Alliance to Reform CORI) with many other groups is at the forefront of this important move.

- **Provide Court Diversion of Low Level Offenders - (Rep Martin Walsh is lead sponsor)**

The bill allows MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services treatment oversight for low level offenders who would opt for treatment as alternative sentencing. Without further crime, there would be no application of a criminal record. New England Policy Advocates are spearheading this proposal.

- **Support Criminal Justice Reform** for effective post-incarceration society re-entry, improve current mandatory minimum sentencing; support policies that provide diversion to drug treatment; fund effective addiction treatment for the incarcerated, & community prevention and education.. MA Bar Association Drug Policy Task Force moves this agenda!

### **How Can You Help Now. Get MOAR Involved for Next Steps**

The above legislative proposals have been filed. You can help by asking your elected legislators to cosponsor any of these bills by February 4th. Cosponsoring gives added support to the bills, which have 18 months to pass. You can call, write, or email your elected legislators with this request for support. You can send them a copy of this document.

#### **To Find Your Legislator's Name and More**

State's Citizen Information Number:

1- 800-392-6090

Go on The Web:

[www.wheredoivotema.com](http://www.wheredoivotema.com)

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