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**Testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
In Support of HB2365
February 22, 2021**

Chairman Patton and Committee Members,

Our associations support HB2365. The first priority in drug overdoses is the life of the person at risk. That also applies to a person has been injured during a period of drug use. The drug related criminal activity the person was involved in is secondary. It is also critical for other persons to believe they can stay and help the person needing assistance without facing simple possession charges.

It is also important to not shield more serious crimes from prosecution such as distribution or manufacturing of illegal drugs. Such an immunity would be especially troubling if the illness or injury the person suffered was precipitated by a more serious drug crime. This bill provides balance between the life saving interests and retaining the ability to investigate and charge those involved in more serious drug related crimes that could have contributed to the illness or injury.

The bill appears to be fashioned after the law passed several years ago dealing with minors who become ill after consuming alcohol and those that stay and assist the person. We have not had any problems with the application of that law and do not anticipate any if HB2365 is enacted.

We urge you to move this bill forward favorably.

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