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Moms Like Us

August 20, 2014

Re: Clubhouse International Proposal for Victoria, BC

I applaud your initiative in raising support for Clubhouse International to set up a clubhouse in Victoria, BC. Clubhouses provide essential support to people living with mental illness, by providing spaces to find respect, hope, and opportunities.

As the Member of Parliament for Victoria, I have met frequently with local mental health activists and organizations, as well as with the Mental Health Commission in Ottawa. The Mental Health Commission's 2012 report, *Changing directions, changing lives: The mental health strategy for Canada*, notes that 46% of Canadians believe that mental illness is used as an excuse for poor behaviour. The stigma of mental illness "has blighted people's attitudes for far too long," and has led to discrimination against those who need support, respect, treatment, and services.

The Clubhouse International mission is to offer friendship, housing, education, and employment to persons who live with mental illness. I understand their approach is scientifically proven, and used throughout the world. Victoria would greatly benefit from such a resource, as mental illness affects everyone, either personally or through friends, family, or coworkers. I am very supportive of your effort to establish a clubhouse, thereby raising awareness and providing vital support for individuals living with mental illness.

Yours truly,

Murray Rankin, Member of Parliament (Victoria)



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