

Dear Delegate/State Senator:

I am a parent of two children and am very concerned with the wording of SB 611 and HB 782.

The synopsis is alarming .

" Providing that all minors, rather than only minors who are 16 years old or older, have the same capacity as an adult to consent to consultation, diagnosis, and treatment of a mental or emotional disorder by a health care provider or clinic; and providing that a health care provider may decide to provide certain information to a certain parent, guardian, or custodian under certain provisions of law unless the health care provider believes that the disclosure will lead to harm to the minor or deter the minor from seeking care."

yellow: this statement is outrageous. Of course no child has the same capacity as an adult for any of these. green: this is very subjective and what is to keep a medical provider from claiming any procedure or drug is "care" and which situations warrant parental notification? Why not change the wording to what I think you may be trying to get at, situations of abuse? Why make this so open to interpretation and problematic?

Navigating medical decisions as an adult is hard enough, to entrust this responsibility to a minor is troubling. To have no bottom age is just reckless. We as parents are legally responsible and this bill would limit information to us as well as increase the likelihood that our child could make a medical decision harmful to themselves.

I'm not sure what medical situation this bill aims to fix, but it opens up many serious situations. Who decides if a child is competent for this responsibility and based on what, their intelligence, their maturity, what about kids with complex medical needs who may not be aware of all the implications in a decision and without parental input neither would the provider? What about children with disabilities or mental health issues that may affect their medical decision making abilities? I cannot adequately do my job as a parent if I am not informed of medication or procedures given to my child. Yet should there be a serious adverse health effect to improper medication, etc., I as parent would still be left with the consequences medically, financially, legally and criminally should something go wrong as a result of not being included in the decision making process.

For all the above reasons I urge you not to support SB611/HB782.

Sincerely,

Judith Birnbaum

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