

HB0782  
Shawna Sherrell  
**Opposed**

Dear Committee Members,

I'm writing as a Maryland resident to ask that you oppose HB0782: Minor Consent to Mental and Emotional Disorders, which has a hearing in the HGO Committee on 2/26.

I'm troubled by all of the recent legislation that is determined to remove parental rights in the state of Maryland. My husband solves violent crimes for a living, and while yes, I agree, that horrible things happen, the vast majority of people are taking great care of their children and want what's best for them. Do we take away the rights of all to solve a problem for a few?

What is most concerning to me is a) there is NO minimum age on this bill, b) a health practitioner does not have to share any type of information with a parent, and c) with this bill, parents could be completely left in the dark about their minor children receiving a diagnosis or being on any type of pharmaceutical. Pharmaceutical drugs require supervision and communication between a health care provider and the family.

As it's written, this bill brings up many questions that remain unresolved. How would a minor child get to appointments? Where is the liability if something goes wrong because a parent isn't informed? How do we know the provider chosen is providing quality care? What happens if a diagnosis follows a child for the rest of their life? What happens if a child feels coerced into agreeing to something because the person presenting the option to them is an adult? How does a minor the age of 5 or 6 understand what they are agreeing to?

Please think critically about this bill and the negative impact it would have on Maryland parents and families. Oppose HB0782.

Sincerely,  
Shawna Sherrell  
District 5