

HB0782

Jaime Brooke

Opposed

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to strongly oppose HB0782-Minor Consent to Mental Health Treatment.

I am a licensed clinical social worker in the state of Maryland, and a mother of two children. This bill is very concerning, especially with the vagueness or lack of specificity when it comes to minimum age of consent, financial responsibility, cognitive/developmental ability to understand diagnosis and everything that could possibly take place in a given situation. It is my understanding that there is no minimum age specified on the bill. What if the child is only 4 years old? They are clearly not going to be able to assess their surroundings, the individuals that are evaluating them, understand what's going on, etc. They will not be able to provide important health history/information to health practitioners that are present. Will the bill be amended to remove pharmaceutical drug treatment? What if the child has a known drug allergy that the school or adults involved are not aware of? This bill has a lot of concerning "holes" that could lead to disaster, in my opinion. Lastly, being in the health field I know first-hand the consequences of being given a misdiagnosis. These diagnoses can follow a child through life, and stigma is real. I worry that this sets up a situation where mistakes are more likely to be made. Please oppose this bill and keep the parents involved in their child's health decisions and mental health care.

Thank you,
Jaime Brooke
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