

HB0782  
Kara Fisher  
**Opposed**

Dear HGO Committee Members,

I oppose HB 0782, which would give minors the ability to seek out and “purchase” mental health services.

As a parent of children in public schools, I find the counselors are quite proactive in offering opportunities for children to seek counseling or support. This bill would provide duplicative resources.

As a practical consideration, how will a 5-year-old find and pay for a counseling session? How is the kindergartener a substitute for a parent to find a qualified counselor covered by his Medicaid or other insurance plan’s Behavioral health coverage?

I appreciate the intention of the bill to ensure that all children have access to mental health services, but if this bill passes, a parent may not be aware that his child is receiving mental health services. The language says that the provider “may decide” to alert the parent. That delay of notification could put a depressed or anxious child at risk.

I ask you to oppose HB 0782; it will be discussed in a Committee hearing tomorrow, February 26.

Thank you.  
Kara Fisher  
District 19