

Lilian Cross, In Favor of HB 782.

Good afternoon member of the Health and Government Operations Committee. My name is Lilian Cross and I am a student at Severna Park Middle School. But what if I was a teenage gay boy? What if I was a girl in foster care? What if I had abusive parents? Parents who don't believe in mental illness? Parents who think that mental illness makes one weak? What if I was suicidal and I was too scared to tell my parents? Do I still deserve mental health? Yes. Then how do I get it? Do I go to my parents who will only make things worse? When I go to the doctor every month I have to be the one to pick up my birth control as no one else is allowed to. My mom cannot even access my records because it is about me. But that is gynecology and this is mental health. What is the difference? Both are healthcare and both are a potential for danger. We need to break the stigma surrounding mental illness. We need to make mental health treatment more accessible for all who need it. We need to lower the age of consent to speak to a mental health professional without notifying the child's parents.