

February 12, 2021

Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, MD. 21401

**In Support - HB 132: Health – Mental and Emotional Disorders - Consent**

Good afternoon members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee.

I am the parent of a child with multiple challenges and disabilities. I am a member of Parent Advocacy Consortium, and we advocate for children like my son, and other individuals with disabilities that require time, resources and support to help them in getting them the health care services that they may need.

Treatment and the timing of the start of treatment can be crucial to improving the prospects and outcomes of children that suffer with a variety of challenges. This bill would allow a 12-year-old versus waiting until 16-year-old before seeking mental health care services on their own.

Time is of the essence of making a change in the life of a child. We fully support greater availability and access to services through the health care system for all Maryland children, when they need them.

Please return a favorable report and support HB 132, updating age for the choices and services that are vital to the lives of so many within our communities of sick and disabled persons.

Thank you for considering my testimony today.

Kind regards,

Mr. Richard Ceruolo  
Parent and Advocate for persons with disabilities.