

Health and Government Operations - HB1160 - Favorable

Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and the Health and Government Operations Committee,

Honorable members of the committee, I sincerely hope you never find yourself watching a family member regress in their treatment, and potentially become a menace to themselves or others.

I hope you never feel the powerlessness, as an adult family member spirals, and you can do nothing to help them. I hope you never have to look at the reams of documentation you hold onto, that you forward to the government and the public defender, each time your family member runs afoul of the law.

I sincerely hope each and every one of you never has to experience any of those moments.

I have experienced them all.

Delegate Kipke and Delegate Henson's bill is a small change to existing law, clarifying the definition of harm, and adding "IS REASONABLY EXPECTED, IF NOT HOSPITALIZED, TO PRESENT" a danger to the life or safety of the individual or of others.

This small change would grant so much to the families of those afflicted with severe mental illness. We could advocate to the justice system for intervention, versus sitting idly by as our loved ones deteriorate. We could forward our reams of documentation to the state or public defender or the defense attorney, and have hope.

We could have a small measure of hope that the system will help our loved ones and return them to us.

As such, I urge a favorable report on HB 1160, "Mental Health Law – Reform of Laws and Delivery of Service".

Thank you,

John Jasen  
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