

To: Honorable Chairman Brenner, Vice-Chairwoman Slaby and Committee Members

Person Testifying : Janice Bundas

Subject: Support of Amendment to HB377

Purpose of Amendment: Requires Department of Education-schools and charter schools-to post signs containing the child abuse and neglect hotline number.

My name is Janice Bundas. I am a child advocate working on behalf of child abuse victims nationwide. Passing amendment to HB377 will allow Ohio to join 30 other states that have already passed similar types of legislation including Alaska, California, Texas, Florida and New York.

I am passionate about helping children who are suffering sexual abuse. Starting at the age of six years old I was molested by several family members. And the abuse continued into junior high. I was raped. My mother and Aunt knew I was being molested by 2 brothers and a cousin and did nothing to stop the abuse. They protected the predators-I was warned not to tell. My mother would walk through the room when the molestation was happening and never once hesitated to help me. Other people were in the same room with me when I was being molested; they ignored what was happening to me. I wanted to scream. I didn't because I knew no one cared. I knew I had no value.

As a child advocate I asked myself, "What can be done today for these children that would have helped me?" The answer is this poster.

Requiring schools to post the child abuse hotline number in areas students frequent is a perfect mechanism to accomplish 3 goals:

1. It gives them the knowledge they are value
2. The knowledge they have the right to self-report abuse
3. It gives them the mechanism to do so while in the safe environment of the school, without having to look someone in the eye to make the initial report

The following statistics are provided by the Center of Child Advocacy. Please consider the financial impact they have on Ohio:

- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused (before the age of 18)
- The median age of a child who is sexually abused is 9 years old
- 1 out of 7 victims, reported to law enforcement, is under the age of 6
- Teen pregnancy-60% preceded by sexual abuse
- Homelessness-50% of homeless women had been sexually abused
- Drug and Alcohol dependency-70%-80% had been abused
- Incarceration-60% of women had been sexually abused

The Children's Advocacy Center created a poster for this legislation. It is available to every state in the nation at no cost. The message is clear, positive, easy to comprehend, and appropriate for all ages. Using an adobe writer, Ohio can insert their child abuse hotline number and put the poster online. The only cost to schools to download and print the poster is paper, ink and the material to laminate the poster. Amendment to HB377 is not a hardship on schools.

The National Conference of State legislators wrote a brief in January 2015, Vol.23, No.1, in support of this legislation, calling it concrete, simple and an inexpensive way for schools children to be able to seek help in a safe environment.

I encourage and urge you to vote yes to amendment HB377.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak concerning this matter.

IT'S OK TO TELL!

If someone hurts you:

Say

NO

GO

to a safe place

TELL

a trusted adult



Call

for help or **911** for emergencies

For more information:

Don't ever keep a secret that upsets you!

ESTÁ BIEN QUE LO DIGAS.

Si alguien te lastima:

Di

NO

VETE

a un lugar seguro

CUÉNTALE

a un adulto en el que confíes



Llama al

para obtener ayuda, o al **911** en caso de emergencias.

Para más información, visita

¡Nunca guardes un secreto que te moleste!