

Debra DiCillo
128 Lindsay Court
Elyria, Ohio 44035
2/18/20

Dave Burke
Chair
Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee of the Ohio Senate

Dear Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Committee:

My name is Deb DiCillo and I am a resident of Elyria, Ohio. I am providing written testimony in support of SB 126, specifically for the proposed language changes that will expand Ohio Revised Code 5122.04 to include children under age 14, who are now dying by suicide at double the rate they did a decade ago.

My own daughter, Elissa, died by suicide. Her daughter was 11 years old at the time. She was at an increased risk of suicide and very desperately needed help. Unfortunately, her father was unable to consent.

Expanding Ohio Revised Code 5122.04 would allow children like her to receive a crisis risk assessment. The proposed update keeps the important language for youth ages 14 and older, and also allows for a crisis assessment for younger children when there is evidence that the child may be suicidal. The child's safety and well-being can be assessed by a professional while the professional continues to make a good-faith effort to connect with the parent or guardian.

It is imperative that we respond quickly to a child in crisis. Ohio cannot wait to address the trend of younger people dying by suicide. SB 126 updates the ORC to make it possible to save younger lives.

Thank you for considering my testimony today.

Sincerely,

Debra DiCillo