

Dear Senator Brenner and Committee,

Attached is a witness form to accompanying the below testimony expressing vehement disagreement with Senate Bill 8.

As a former child welfare social worker, school social worker, and now a professor of social work teaching and supervising students, I can testify that the components of Bill 8 will have a **devastating impact** on Ohio students, schools, and communities.

Social workers already have a professional and ethical mandate to report any concerns about a youth expressing harm to self or others as well as to report child abuse and neglect concerns. Otherwise, it is imperative that social workers (like other service providers) are **trusted by their clients to maintain confidentiality**. Without this confidentiality, students will **simply not share** critical information with their social workers and some may just **stop seeing them** all together.

Subsequently, this has an enormous societal impact including **preventing treatment, threatening school and community safety** and increasing the risk of **undetected child abuse** and neglect. Moreover, we are potentially **increasing child abuse** if we disclose information to families that could be impetus for parental outrage and aggressiveness.

Social workers *cannot and will not* abide by this law because it directly contradicts our professional mission and licensure requirements. We will always find a way to protect our clients.

Respectfully,

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