



Safe Children, Stable Families, Supportive Communities

House Health Committee  
Interested Party Testimony on HB 172  
November 19, 2025  
Mary Wachtel, Director of Public Policy  
Public Children Services Association of Ohio  
175 South Third Street, Suite 1150, Columbus, OH 43215  
[Mary@pcsao.org](mailto:Mary@pcsao.org)  
614.224.5802

Good morning, Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written interested party testimony on HB 172, *Prohibit mental health services to minors without parental consent*, on behalf of the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO). PCSAO is a membership-driven association of Ohio's 88 county Public Children Services Agencies that advocates for sound public policy, promotes program excellence, and builds public value for safe children, stable families, and supportive communities.

The PCSAO Legislative Committee has conducted an initial review of this bill and identified several questions and concerns we offer for your consideration.

HB172 would repeal [ORC Sec. 5122.04](#) which allows a minor who is at least 14 to consent to outpatient mental health treatment for a limited period of time. This ORC section has been effective since 1989 and allows short-term, mental health treatment without parental consent, only under certain circumstances:

- Child must be 14 or older
- Outpatient MH services only, excluding medication
- Services are limited to not more than six sessions or thirty days, whichever occurs first. After that timeframe, the services must stop or the MH professional,

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37 West Broad Street, Suite 1100, Columbus, OH 43215

Ph: 614-224-5802

[www.pcsao.org](http://www.pcsao.org)

with permission of the minor, can inform the parent and obtain consent for ongoing treatment.

- The MH professional may inform the parent if they determine substantial probability of harm to the youth or other persons and if they notify the youth of the disclosure
- The MH professional is subject to mandated reporter requirements per 2151.421

It is our understanding that most youth who access outpatient mental health treatment services do so with the assistance and support of a parent or guardian. When older youth access services directly without the assistance and support of a parent or guardian, it is typically in emergency circumstances, or when parents cannot be reached to provide consent for the service, or when the youth may be at perceived risk of harm from their parent or guardian. The safeguards in place for accessing this treatment ensure that these are short-term services only, and do not allow for longer-term ongoing services without parental consent.

Youth in foster care have high rates of unmet mental health needs. Denying this limited access to outpatient mental health services for youth 14 and older may raise the risk of children services involvement due to unresolved mental health needs. This limited access with appropriate safeguards has been available to Ohio youth for 26 years; we encourage careful consideration of the impact on vulnerable youth as you review this bill.

Thank you for accepting this written testimony. I can be reached at 614.224.5802, [mary@pcsa.org](mailto:mary@pcsa.org) for further discussion.