

Opponent Testimony for HB 172
Health Committee
11/19/2025
Wesley Chivington, LSW, MSW

Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Health Committee,

My name is Wesley Chivington, and I thank you for hearing my testimony. I am a resident of Greene County and a social worker serving the Miami Valley area. I specialize in trauma responsive practice, family advocacy, and in advocacy and treatment for survivors of domestic violence. Although I have several years of educational and professional experience as a social worker, I come to you today as a child survivor of violence whose life depended on the very exemptions HB 172 threatens to erase.

My body trembles as I think back to that childhood experience that I can now identify was a mental health crisis. I felt alone, hopeless, and couldn't imagine living another day. A child coming from a typical household may have felt safe enough to go to their parents for support, but this wasn't an option in my case - it wasn't safe to do so. I know some of the abuse I experienced had already been reported, but no help came for me. I had to get help on my own.

The current law allows kids with experiences like mine to temporarily work with a mental health professional without parental consent. This allowance is brief but lifesaving; offering a short window where minors can plan for safety in their unique circumstances. In my case, I was able to get support from professionals who helped save my life. After the temporary allowance was up, they even collaborated alongside safe adults in my family to support my mental health needs.

As an adult, I became a social worker to help create a future where people in my community have more resources for support and protection from harm than I did growing up - HB 172 does the opposite. If HB 172 passed, kids that are living in a home like the one I grew up in would have less access to lifesaving care, they could die.

It is for these reasons that, on behalf of child victims and survivors of violence who direly need support, I ask you to VOTE NO on HB 172.

Best wishes,

Wesley Chivington, LSW, MSW

Child Survivor of Violence