

November 18, 2025

To: Health Committee: Dear Chairman Schmidt, Vice-Chair Deter, Ranking Member Somani, Rep. Baker, Rep. Barhorst, Rep. Brownlee, Rep. Craig, Rep. Grim, Rep. Gross, Rep. King, Rep. Miller, Rep. Stewart and Rep. White,

I am writing today in opposition of HB 172.

Current Ohio law, ORC 5122.04, allows minors aged 14 and older to receive a mental health safety net under specific and time limited situations in which parental consent is unavailable to be safely given. As a social worker, I wanted to share examples of ways in which this protection is able to serve children at times of their greatest need, with a limit of up to six mental health sessions or 30 days of care no matter the situation.

The specifications of when practice can take place without consent include situations in which:

- providers cannot safely involve a parent
 - An example of this would be when a parent has made threats toward a child. This law maintains the requirement for mandating reporting, while also allowing providers to support children as they are linked with additional services.
- have parents who refuse needed care
 - For example, mental health support for children who are engaging in self-harm or suicidal behaviors and guardians refuse care.
- cannot reach their parent for consent
 - For example, parents who have left or been detained and have not designated a guardian. When teens are struggling to manage mental health concerns during these periods, care is critical.
- need a short window to process an experience before involving their family
 - An example of this could be a teen that is struggling with conditions or relationships in the home that they do not yet feel comfortable addressing. Mental health providers are currently able to build a trusting, professional relationship with teens to support them in planning communication with their family. Without this support, teens are more likely to seek unsafe solutions such as leaving home or gaining support from predatory adults.

For clarity, ORC 5122.04 does not override mandated reporting, prescribe medication, or diminish the essential role of parents. With time limited support, it is able to build relationships between families and provide a safety net for vulnerable young people who would otherwise be left with no access to mental health support.

I urge the committee to please consider the harm that can be done by ending this protection for our teens. I firmly believe that all involved parties want to support and protect children across our state. Limiting access to care by removing already limited protections will not help our children, and put more at risk.

Thank you for your time.

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Mother and Social Worker

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Article concerning limitations for teen mental health: [Parental Consent Rules May Hinder Teen Mental Health Treatment - News Center](#)