

As a clinical social worker in Columbus, I've seen firsthand how timely intervention in mental health crises—like suicidal ideation or substance use—can save lives. The ability to meet with youth immediately, without parental consent delays, has prevented escalation and ensured safety.

While family collaboration is important, immediate parental involvement can sometimes increase risk, potentially leading to violence, rejection, or abuse. In such cases, my ethical duty is to protect the young person's safety and well-being above all else.

House Bill 172 would hinder our ability to respond swiftly to mental health crises, creating barriers to care and putting vulnerable youth at greater risk. I urge the committee to reject HB 172 to preserve mental health professionals' ability to provide safe, timely intervention for adolescents in crisis.