



Cecilia Yelton, OCPC, ICPS

Director of Prevention

Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Services Board of Logan and Champaign Counties

Chair, Suicide Prevention Coalition of Logan and Champaign Counties

6/24/2024

Chairwoman Pavliga, Vice Chairwoman White, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the Ohio House Behavioral Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written advocacy on behalf of HB 571. My name is Cecilia Yelton. I serve as the Director of Prevention for the Mental Health, Drug, and Alcohol Services Board of Logan and Champaign Counties and Chair of the Suicide Prevention Coalition serving my communities.

I am writing in support of HB 571. As a prevention professional, I understand the power of dosage. The more doses of prevention programming, messaging, and resource sharing students receive, the more they retain and use that information when it matters. HB 571 is yet another opportunity to provide a dose of a life-saving resource to our students.

One of my responsibilities is collecting data on local youth risk and protective factors. We do so through partnerships with our local school districts and utilize Search Institutes Attitudes and Behaviors Surveys. We survey 8th, 10th, and 12th-grade students and measure several risk and protective factors, including youth depression and suicidal ideation. In Champaign County, data suggests that 21% of students report feeling depressed in the last 30 days, and 17% have attempted suicide one or more times in their lifetime. Logan County data suggests that 20% of students report being depressed in the last 30 days, and 15% have attempted suicide one or more times in their lifetime. As I mentioned above, HB 571 is yet another opportunity to provide a life-saving resource to the 15- 17% of students who have contemplated completing suicide in my community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions regarding my advocacy, please contact me at cyelton@mhdas.org.

Respectfully,

Cecilia Yelton