

Dear Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee,

As a parent and as an RN, I oppose this bill because it invades personal privacy. Patient autonomy and self-determination are strong values of the nursing profession. This also applies to families-as-clients. Parents are the ones who are charged with caring for the health of their children and health issues, including mental health -- are always conversations to have with both parents and children together and with full knowledge and consent from the parents (except in cases of abuse, of course). Furthermore, it is behavior/lifestyle changes in the parents that have a huge impact on the health of their children. So, although I recognize the importance of addressing critical issues like drug abuse, vaping, unsafe sexual behaviors, depression/suicide and poor nutrition in our children -- I don't believe that this bill is the way to go about doing this. Rather, we need to focus on parents, caregivers and community supports. We should consider a broader community approach, gathering data from whole families and not simply from minor students.

Regards,
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