

Submitter: Karen A. Staben

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services Measure,
Appointment or Topic: HB3835

Dear Members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services:

As a former K-5 Elementary Special Educator for nearly 20 years, I have had multiple trainings in de-escalation, cooperative problem solving and the legal and safe use of restraint and seclusion. Also in that time, I have supervised multiple “room clears” due to the escalated and potentially dangerous behavior of students in crisis. I have held space at the ends of hallways with trained and licensed behavior specialists as we worked to deescalate a student tearing down every bulletin board in the hall. I would never suggest that those types of incidents result in physical restraint.

Unfortunately, due to the current law I have also worked desperately to keep a child from harming themselves without restraining them. This process has often led to a lengthening of the dysregulation period and personal injury. Yes, I have been scratched, had my hair pulled out, been bitten, punched, kicked and spit on. I admit, none of which created “permanent injury or death”.

HB 3835 continues to protect our children and students from unnecessary and potentially dangerous restraint and seclusion. HB 3835 continues to require consistent and accurate reporting. HB 3835 does not institute a step back to abusive treatment of students but provides a reasonable step toward protecting students from self-harm and at the same time protecting teachers and staff.

I urge your support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Karen A. Staben