



CITIZENS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS Alaska/Montana/Washington

February 8, 2022

Senate Health & Social Services Committee

Re: SB 80 relating to mental health education

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

SB 80 should be about what we tell our children so they can maintain the ideals of their parents and society, and recover from the travails of life when tragedy hits causing an emotional crisis.

Giving the parents the rightful ability to control what is taught to their children is essential.

Other factors remain with SB 80 that need to be addressed. It is clear now, that change must come to our mental health system, and the methods our government authorizes and allows to be used on Alaskans.

“There is now unequivocal evidence of the failures of a system that relies too heavily on the biomedical model of mental health services, including the front-line and excessive use of psychotropic medicines, and yet these models persist.” - UN Special Rapporteur Dainius Pūras, M.D.

We must move away from business as usual, training people into the crisis model of mental illness, referral to a psychiatrist, diagnosing with a label, and then being drugged and possibly becoming a patient for life, all while there is no medical test to objectively show anything is wrong with the brains of anyone being prescribed psychiatric drugs.

If we are going to be teaching our youth in school, we must begin to teach our youth what can be done, and what is available to be done besides the stigma of lifelong psychiatric labels and drug treatments.

“HAVE YOU BEEN DIAGNOSED with an ‘incurable’ disease like depression? Were you told that your only hope is to manage your symptoms by taking lifelong medications? What if you could eliminate this diagnosis by simply fixing nutrient deficiencies or correcting physiologic imbalances? As such, proper blood tests can highlight these vulnerabilities and guide healing protocols.

“... Years of clinical practice and a deeper understanding of common symptoms have led me away from running dozens of lab tests. For example, I no longer order salivary cortisol testing, as the results confirm what we already know: we’re enduring unprecedented levels of stress. I’m happy to share with you the five most common and helpful blood tests that I still use with my patients.” – Kelly Brogan, M.D. - *Five Lab Tests Your Doctor Isn’t Ordering*

“DSM teaches psychiatrists to lump and label rather than to split and diagnose. It teaches them to disregard important symptoms that don't fit conveniently into a DSM list, to ignore patients, and to skip the scutwork [tedious, menial work] of diagnosis--often with disastrous consequences.”
Sydney Walker III, M.D.

We believe SB 80 needs 4 amendments/revisions for the benefit of citizens it would affect.

Offer parents the right to opt out of this mental health education. Done.

1. Make the bill align with the State of Alaska Suicide Prevention Plan about creating Health and Wellness.
2. Broaden the committee participants to include parents, spiritual advisors/leaders, business leaders and other healthcare professionals.
3. Incorporate language to prevent this from being a screening, referral, diagnosing and treatment system for mental health treatment providers.
4. Include alternative information about what children and families can do that are non-coercive, non-drug using options that can create wellness and prevent a false psychiatric diagnosis.

See amendment drafts attached.

SUMMARY

To protect our children and our future we must move away from the business as usual approach of our current mental health system.

We urge the committee to amend SB 80.

Sincerely,



Steven Pearce
Director

Attachment #1

Draft of amendments to SB 80:

Draft of updated intent section language:

LEGISLATIVE INTENT. It is the intent of the legislature that the Board of Education and Early Development develop guidelines for instruction in mental health ~~in consultation~~ the framework of overall wellness to promote physical, emotional, and mental wellness to strengthen personal and community resilience in coordination with parents, spiritual advisors/leaders, business leaders, complementary and alternative healthcare providers and with the Department of Health and Social Services, regional tribal health organizations, and representatives of national and state mental health organizations.

Amend/revise Sec. 2. AS 14.30.360(a):

AS 14.30.360(a) is amended to read: See underlined text:

(a) Each district in the state public school system shall be encouraged to initiate and conduct a program in health education for kindergarten through grade 12. The program should include instruction in [PHYSICAL] health and personal safety including alcohol and drug abuse education, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), early cancer prevention and detection, dental health, family health including infant care, environmental health, **mental health**, the identification and prevention of child abuse child abduction, neglect, sexual abuse, and domestic violence, and appropriate use of health services. The mental health instruction is to include a broad range of material covering informed consent, psychiatric drug withdrawal symptoms and complementary and alternative approaches to mental health and emphasize non-drug non-coercive approaches and medical causes of mental crises that mimic psychiatric disorders.

And amend/revise Sec 3. AS 14.30.360(b) see underlined text:

Health guidelines must provide standards for instruction in mental health and shall be developed in consultation with the Department of Health and Social Services and representatives of national and state mental health organizations and must include active participation from parents, spiritual advisors/leaders, business leaders, complementary and alternative healthcare providers and any school curriculum materials must include non-drug, non-coercive alternatives and material on medical causes of emotional crises that mimic psychiatric disorders.

End