

## Jody Simpson

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**From:** Jennifer Pinard [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 4:54 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB 80

Dear Rep David Wilson,

I am writing to request you reject HB 25, HB 60, and SB80. Alaskans don't want their schools to become institutions of indoctrination; we want them to be a place where children learn reading, writing, mathematics, and traditional academic subjects. These social and emotional standards and efforts to embed mental health assets in schools are a major departure from the "adequate" education clause in the Alaska Constitution.

Any local district who wants to do this can decide at the local level- with tax payer approval. It should not be mandated by the state or codified in statute as a requirement of an "adequate" education. It represents another unfounded mandate.

Please table these discussions on these bills and reject these three pieces of legislation.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Pinard

[REDACTED] Wasilla 99687

## Jody Simpson

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**From:** Kat CCHR <cchrkat@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 20, 2021 9:33 AM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Fwd: SB 80 Amendments

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**From:** Kat CCHR <[cchrkat@gmail.com](mailto:cchrkat@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sat, Apr 17, 2021 at 10:12 PM  
**Subject:** SB 80 Amendments  
**To:** <[Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov)>

### CITIZENS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS Alaska/Montana/Washington

April 17, 2021

Senate Health & Social Services Committee

**Re: SB 80** relating to mental health education

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

As a follow up to our previous testimony, we have some additional points to make.

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

1. Offer parents the right to opt out of this mental health education.
2. Make the bill align with the State of Alaska Suicide Prevention Plan about creating Health and Wellness.
3. Broaden the committee participants to include parents, spiritual advisors/leaders, business leaders and other healthcare professionals.
4. Incorporate language to prevent this from being a screening, referral, diagnosing and treatment system for mental health treatment providers.

The intent of SB 80 to improve mental health education must be focused on the improvement of youth health and it should be with the full agreement of parents.

On the issue of suicide, the statistics speak for themselves: Our current approach to suicide prevention simply is not working. The problem is the majority of prevention and treatment efforts focus on addressing a person's underlying mental disorder, not his or her suicidal behavior. We need to rethink suicide prevention and change the conversation. It is time we stop viewing suicide as a symptom of a mental health disorder and begin seeing

suicide as a behavior—a behavior that must be addressed independently of any underlying disorders. The Statewide Suicide Prevention Council recognizes this need for change, and has language supporting this:

“... the Council is encouraging Alaskans to recast that net and continue to promote physical, emotional, and mental wellness and strengthen personal and community resilience — to prevent suicide by promoting the health of our people, families, and communities. “

Mental health education to date, is typically driven by providers of psychiatric/pharmaceutical services/treatments who will benefit from the screening, referral, diagnosis and treatment /drugging approach that has led to the roughly 7 million youth today who are on psychiatric drugs.

Anyone can readily look up the results of the Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey and see a long list of real world risky behaviors youth are experiencing in society which are not solved by psychiatric labels or drugs, which includes: drug use (personally or by others in the home), homelessness, being bullied, obesity, lack of exercise and poor diet to name a few.

As written the legislative intent is far too narrow when it limits the Board of Education and Early Development to only consult with “mental health organizations.

Amending this Intent Section to read something like this:

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 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 representatives of mental health organizations and regional tribal health organizations, including the National Council for Behavioral Health, Providence Health and Services Alaska, the Southcentral Foundation, Anchorage Community Mental Health Services, Inc., the North Star Behavioral Health System, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness Alaska.

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

The program should include instruction in [PHYSICAL] health and personal safety including alcohol and drug abuse education, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), early cancer prevention 1 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 complimentary and alternative approaches to mental health and emphasize non-drug approaches.

And amend/revise Sec 3. AS 14.30.360(b) [see page 2 of bill]

Draft of updated language:

**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.**

The issue of what training material will be presented for “valid information” and “products and services” is a key issue. A broad approach to creating healthy youth with a focus on wellness in line with the “Recasting the

Net” report from the State of Alaska Suicide Prevention Plan will break the mold of the failures of past mental health marketing and training efforts.

Please amend/revise SB 80 per our suggested language. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss needed language and to provide more material on these points.

Sincerely,

Steven Pearce  
Director

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**POB 19633 \* Seattle, WA 98109 \* 206.755.5230 \* [cchrseattle@outlook.com](mailto:cchrseattle@outlook.com)**