
From: Steven Pearce <cchrseattle@outlook.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2022 10:51 PM
To: Rep. Kelly Merrick
Subject: HB 60 testimony against House Finance 4-10-22

April 10, 2022

House Finance Committee

Re: HB 60 relating to mental health education

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

HB 60 must be amended to address what the mental health education in the classroom will result in.

We all want what is best for our children, what will help them, what will help others, and keep them safe and sound throughout their lives.

Important questions should be asked of the bill's sponsor and supporters before HB 60 progresses any further. These are questions that are likely not to be answered or even really considered in mental health education unless HB 60 is amended:

1. When is normal childhood behavior a mental disorder? When is it not?
2. Why are no objective physical medical tests used to diagnose behavior as mental illness?
3. Are there other causes, physical causes of behavior that should be addressed before a child is diagnosed as "mentally ill" that mimic psychiatric disorders?
4. What is the role of the parent/legal guardian on opting out of this education and will they be adequately informed of what the education really covers?
5. Will Parents/legal guardians be made aware that there are alternative approaches to creating and maintaining mental health besides psychiatric labels and psychiatric drug treatments?
6. Will children (and parents) be educated about the dangers and failures of psychiatric labels, diagnosis and treatments? i.e. will they learn about the toxic and damaging nature of the drugs used as treatments and the common failures of these treatments?
7. What is the biggest reason individuals stop taking their prescribed psychiatric medication?
8. What are the dangers of sudden withdrawal from psychiatric drugs?
9. What is polypharmacy and how should this be addressed or avoided?
10. What is psychiatric drug induced psychosis?
11. Can kids have suicidal thoughts as a result of taking psychiatric drugs themselves?
12. What are psychiatric drug side effects and do these exist separate from behavior?
13. What is the role of exercise, nutrition and spiritual assistance/guidance in mental health?
14. In regard to the emergency room visits by youth, is the stated proportion of youth in emergency room visits higher in percentage of total ER visits or in actual number of ER visits? (ER visits for other healthcare reasons have been lower during covid, so if kids show up in the same number the "percentage" or "proportion" may be up, but this is not an actual increase)
15. How will mental health training deal with real world issues such as those identified in the Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Some of these health risk behaviors are: obesity, smoking, too much screen time, lack of physical activity, drug use, bullying, homelessness, sugary drinks, driving under influence of

drugs and texting while driving. How will training prevent these youth from being taken advantage of by being turned into psychiatric patients? Possibly for life?

To address some of the bill's deficiencies, we have identified the following 4 amendments:

1. Offer parents the right to opt out of this mental health education.
2. Broaden the committee participants to include parents, other non-psychiatric healthcare professionals, spiritual advisors/leaders, business leaders who have experience dealing with youth using non-drug, non-coercive approaches in order to provide a holistic approach to mental health education for youth.
3. Incorporate language to how physical conditions can mimic psychiatric disorders and should be screened for by competent non-psychiatric doctors to prevent misdiagnosis and prevent unnecessary psychiatric labels and treatment with toxic psychiatric drugs.
4. Make the bill align with the State of Alaska Suicide Prevention Plan about creating Health and Wellness.

HB 60 raises many questions about the nature of what will be taught and the bill in its current form lacks accountability to the legislature and the children and families of Alaska.

Please amend HB 60 with our amendments (see attached). 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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