



Opposition Statement HB132

Health – Mental and Emotional Disorders – Consent (Mental Health Access Initiative)

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We Strongly Oppose HB132

On behalf of our members in Anne Arundel County and across the state, we respectfully yet strongly object to HB132. **We believe the bill, as drafted, might be applied opportunistically to children under 16 to obtain consent for either abortion or physician assisted suicide (PAS), both of which are dangerously promoted as solutions for depression and anxiety.**

We believe reasonable adults, and particularly parents, agree that children under the age of 16 are not mentally or emotionally capable of giving consent to any medical "treatment" and that the state must preserve the natural and legal authority of parents to consent to health care consulting, treatment and procedures for their minor children.

We have witnessed how legalized Physician Assisted Suicide has been aggressively expanded by other countries like [Canada](#) which is now attempting to kill sick children through physician assisted suicide without the consent of parents. In the Netherlands, minor children legally may be prescribed lethal drugs as a solution to depression.

This bill presents a serious risk that children may be preyed upon by adults who either unintentionally or intentionally subject children to treatment that is not in the best interest of the child and that would violate the child's right to privacy.

This risk is exacerbated by errors in the bill's drafting, including ambiguity in the terms "emotional disorders" and "clinic". The existing language of the statute including the term "**clinic**" as a qualifier of "medical provider", threatens to give abortion clinics access to school-aged children. There have been various bills introduced to allow abortion clinic affiliates to either qualify as **school-based health centers** or to remotely subscribe chemical abortion pills or provide publicly funded **transportation** of school students to abortion clinics during their school day, with no notice to or consent of parents. This puts minor children at severe risk of untreated medical complications.

In the case of any child under the age of 16 who becomes pregnant, both parents and law enforcement officials should be informed and the state should pursue criminal prosecution. This bill could be abused by abortion providers to evade liability for failure to report child abuse, sexual assault and sex trafficking.

For these reasons we respectfully urge you to oppose HB132. Thank you.