



ACTION

2/28/08 Testimony of Peter Wolfgang, President of FIC Action, on H.B. 5591

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Good morning Chairman Gaffey, Chairman Fleischmann and members of the committee. My name is Peter Wolfgang and I am the President of the Family Institute of Connecticut Action, an organization whose mission is "to encourage and strengthen the family as the foundation of society and to promote sound, ethical and moral values in our culture and government." I am here today to oppose H.B. 5591, An Act Concerning Healthy Teens.

This bill says that it would create a \$1 million grant to fund "health education" for teenagers. But there is no way to tell from the way this bill is written what the money will really be spent on. This Committee should not vote to spend such a large sum of our tax dollars on so vague a concept.

The public statements made by proponents of this bill also give us cause for concern. At a press conference last week several of them spoke in favor of using the money this bill would provide to promote contraception to children as early as fifth grade. The standards these activists would apply to the sexual education of our youth do not adequately reflect the values of the parents and families that Connecticut's public school system serves.

Notably, the sex-ed activists made no mention at their press conference of abstinence, even though pre-marital adolescent sex has been associated with a number of negative behavioral outcomes including: poor academic performance, substance abuse, mental health problems and illness, as well as increased risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) and out-of-wedlock child bearing. Pre-marital adolescent sex is by definition high-risk behavior. The practice of sexual abstinence for youth is the best form of prevention against HIV infection, other STD's, and out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

The contraception focused education that this bill would support is a simplistic risk reduction strategy with a "physical health only" approach. The abstinence education approach, in contrast, is a multidimensional, holistic health, risk avoidance form of prevention which addresses mental, emotional, and physical health.

Connecticut's youth deserve that sort of holistic support to make the best choices for their current health, future health, and future reproductive health. This bill does not do that. It is for these reasons that I ask you to truly support the health of our teens by voting NO on H.B. 5591.

Public Hearing Testimony Speaker: *Peter Wolfgang*

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