

Thank you, Senators and Representatives for taking the time to seek your constituents' opinions on this important issue. My name is Stacy LaPerriere. I am the mother of six children from Watertown, CT and I have a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work.

I oppose Senate Bill 374 because it violates both parental rights and children's rights.

First, a child's parents know the child best and are the most qualified to recognize the needs of their children. As a loving parent, I will seek out the best services for my child's needs. It is an unwarranted invasion of privacy to administer a mental health assessment without just cause and without the consent of the parents.

Also, this bill does not state the qualifications of the person administering the assessment nor what type of questions would be included. The bill does not explain how a correction could be made if the assessment administrator preformed their assessment incorrectly and thus a child is misdiagnosed. This bill does not disclose what information the form sent to the board of education would include nor why the committee feels that only the public school and home-school children are in need of assessments.

Also, how much of our tax dollars would the assessments cost? Wouldn't our tax dollars be better utilized supporting the already existing services through the department of children and families and the public school system?

Please take the time to understand the existing services and identify ways to make these services more available to the public.

Lastly, I would like to encourage you to consider passing a parental rights amendment to our state constitution as other states have already done. (Idaho, Louisiana, Montana, South Dakota and Wyoming.) It would show that you understand the importance of the parents' right to direct their family and you would take care to preserve our parental rights as you move forward in your efforts to make Connecticut a safer and healthier community.