

Re: S.B. 374, Behavioral Health Assessment

March 8, 2013

Madam, Sirs and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jessenia Sterling and I live in the Town of Southington. I will be speaking on the Proposed Bill S.B. 374 - Behavioral Health Assessments for Children.

I respectfully oppose this bill because it violates parental rights. Parents should have a choice in matters that will affect their children. Speaking for myself, I trust all of my parents' decisions for me. Although homeschooling is not the issue, homeschooling parents pick up on odd behaviors from their children and decide what course of action is best, unlike the public school system.

My sister was in the public school system for four years and was having emotional problems. The school system failed to pick up on her problems, but our mother picked up on it and did what was best for her.

Current practice in schools should already be conducting assessments on common risk and stress factors faced by students exposed to crime, violence, or substance abuse and more. Also, the mental health staff and teaching staff should be meeting with parents to address concerns and appropriate actions to take for the individual. The staff should be receiving ongoing training to address these issues properly.

It is also unfair you exclude the testing of private school children, it is a violation of the civil rights equal treatment. Please reconsider, before making a hasty decision, before signing the S.B. 374 into place.

Also, my sister found this on the internet and I wanted to share it with you:

All children everywhere have the same rights, no matter where they live or what they believe. Almost every government in the world has committed to respecting and protecting these rights. Yet, still so many children around the world are denied their human rights.

Jessenia V. Sterling