

Esteemed Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **OPPOSITION** to HB 6540: An Act Concerning the Prevention of HIV. This bill is vague and leaves the door open to treating minors with preventative drugs without parental consent. This is a violation of parental rights and it undermines the strength of families to make healthcare decisions that are in the best interest of their children, considering there are many ways of preventing the spread of HIV not all of which include a drug with serious side effects and risks.

According to Truvada's (PrEP) manufacturer, side effects include kidney failure, liver failure, and lactic acidosis- which the manufacturer admits plainly could lead to death. <https://www.truvada.com/what-is-truvada/side-effects>. In the event a minor experiences a serious effect from this drug being prescribed without parental consent, who exactly will be liable for this? In Connecticut between the year 2013 and 2017 the average number of people diagnosed with **HIV in CT under age 20 was 13 people**, far less than all other age groups and includes adults aged 18, 19, and 20 years of age. https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/AIDS--Chronic-Diseases/Surveillance/statewide/CT_rate_hiv_age.pdf?la=en Parents have their children's best interests in mind and are best equipped to make decisions having all the information necessary to choose the safest and most effective way to protect their children. Also, without parental consent there could be pre-existing conditions or contraindications that the healthcare worker offering the drug may be unaware of, and the child being treated may not have full understanding of.

HB 6540 does not address how children with cognitive delays or other special needs will be able to provide informed consent for their own treatment. Treating children who may have an unknown cognitive impairment without parental knowledge is **unethical**. Healthcare workers offering treatment may be unaware of such impairments and unfamiliar with the patient.

The difference between existing statutes and HB 6540 is that existing statutes provide healthcare workers the ability to provide treatment that could be life saving to an individual diagnosed with HIV or another serious sexually transmitted disease. **HB 6540 is permitting treating children with no diagnosed disease.** Preventive treatment for children that involves risks should ALWAYS involve the parents

Please do the right thing, preserve parental rights and the safety of children and **OPPOSE** HB 6540.

Respectfully,

Diana Bump
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