

TESTIMONY OF
NEW HAVEN LGBTQ YOUTH TASK FORCE
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

HB 6540, An Act Concerning The Prevention Of HIV

The New Haven LGBTQ Youth Task Force appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning HB 6540, An Act Concerning The Prevention of HIV. We strongly support HB 6540 and the ability of a minor to access HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) from his or her clinician without the consent of the minor's parent or legal guardian. The addition of prevention and prophylaxis of HIV to existing legislation is imperative given the number of new HIV diagnoses among Connecticut's LGBTQ adolescents and young adults.

The New Haven LGBTQ Youth Task Force under the Office of the Mayor strives to empower LGBTQ youth to lead healthy and productive lives. The Task Force has wide representation from across New Haven including teachers, administrators, students, clinicians, advocates and policy makers. HB 6540 is consistent with our mission to ensure LGBTQ youth have access to all available tools to prevent HIV infection. PrEP empowers young people to take care of their personal health regardless of where they are in the process of understanding their sexual orientation and gender identity and sharing this information with people in their lives. For many LGBTQ youth, PrEP is needed before the teen is ready and able to come out to parents, family and friends. Requiring parental consent would inhibit many LGBTQ youth from ever having an initial conversation with a PrEP prescriber, a conversation that may lead not only to HIV prevention but to other personal health choices.

Truvada for HIV prevention is effective and safe for minors, as indicated by the FDA's expanded indication in 2018. When taken consistently, Truvada prevents an HIV negative individual from becoming infected and requiring decades of antiretroviral medications to treat HIV. With such a powerful HIV prevention tool available to our Connecticut goal of "Getting To Zero", we support the availability of PrEP for any Connecticut youth who will benefit.

The New Haven LGBTQ Youth Task Force urges you to pass HB 6540 which provides access to a highly effective HIV prevention pill and empowers youth to make positive choices toward their healthy futures.

Respectfully,

David Weinreb, Fair Haven School Bilingual Teacher

Jason Bartlett, Director of Youth Services, City of New Haven

Daniel Reyes, Executive Director, Junta for Progressive Action

Alberto Cifuentes, Jr., LMSW (Licensed Master of Social Worker)

Krystn Wagner, MD; Fair Haven Community Health Care

Whitney Menary, Yale School of Public Health

Lorrie Quirk, New Haven Public Schools

Phillip Modeen, Youth Librarian

Ryuichi Bell, New Haven Pride Center Support Group Facilitator and Transgender Youth Advocate

Sarah Vaughan, APRN

Hannah Hussey, Yale Law School '20

Christy Olezeski, PhD, Yale Gender Program

John Pachankis, PhD, Yale School of Public Health