

March 23, 2021

Testimony in Support of Raised H.B. No. 6662

AN ACT EQUALIZING COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS TO MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC.

Dear Committee Members,

I am Laura Minor living at 88 Anderson Ave., Bristol, CT 06010. I would like to urge you to support this bill.

Having worked at Wheeler Clinic from 1991 – 2020, I have a great deal of experience with dealing with youth from families with trauma, youth who are addicted or living with those who are and also students struggling in the school system for many reasons.

This bill will reach out to those students who are in need and provide real help to them and their families to ensure that their lives improve, their outlook is more positive and that they get the chances needed to complete school and go on to success in life.

In addition, the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to examine racial disparities in public health is critical. I have worked as a physician assistant in the past in a variety of health care settings and seen the racism evident in our public health system. From limited access to quality health care for so many, to under-training of medical professionals in identifying addressing cultural differences, to prescribing less pain medication for African-American women than White women, these inequities create significant health risks and even higher rates of death.

I know of deaths due to Covid-19 because of lack of care, rejection of patients of color from the emergency room who were truly ill and of course, under-treatment or no treatment because people didn't have access at all to medical coverage or because of lack of sick days in part-time jobs, had to go to work while ill.

As a former adjunct faculty member at the UConn Public Health Program, I know of many examples of inadequacies in data collection for race, ethnicities and other protected classes. Without accurate data, we cannot begin the anti-racist actions needed to repair multiples systems.

This bill will address a number of critical inequities in a number of areas of our public health system, some of which are life-threatening, here in Connecticut. I urge you to support it.

Sincerely,

Laura S. Minor

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88 Anderson Ave.

Bristol, CT 06010

