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Ohio **HB 172** — Testimony Template

Updated Tuesday 11/18/25 at 2:30 pm

We're calling Ohio HB 172 the "Child Abuser Protection Act."

HB 172 (and its identical twin SB 274) would ban all mental health services for minors without parental consent

- HB 172 would fully repeal [section 5122.04 of the Ohio Revised Code](#), which allows 30 day or 6 sessions of mental health care for minors aged 14+ without parental consent
- If a child is being abused by a parent or guardian, 30 days of mental health care without parental consent may be their only opportunity to seek help. That's why the current law exists.
- [Read the official bill analysis here](#)

HB 172 has a hearing this week:

- **WHEN:** Wednesday 11/19/25 at 10:00 AM
- **WHERE:** Ohio Statehouse — Room 121

It's too late to submit testimony for this hearing, but...

- [Here are several actions you can take to help stop this terrible bill](#)
- [Here is information for anyone who already submitted in-person testimony](#)
- [Here are messaging suggestions on HB 172](#)

TAKE ACTION TO STOP HB 172:

1.) Contact the Ohio House Health Committee members listed below:

WHAT TO SAY:

- **There's a reason people call HB 172 the "Child Abuser Protection Act."**
- If (God forbid) a child is being abused by a parent or guardian, 30 days of mental health care without parental consent may be their only opportunity to seek help. **That's why the current law exists!!**
- Getting rid of those 30 days will **ONLY** help child abusers.
- Child abusers will absolutely love HB 172...
- **Is the legislator ok with child abuse? Or will they help stop HB 172?**

Committee Chair Jean Schmidt:

- 614-466-8134
- Rep62@OhioHouse.gov

Vice Chair Kellie Deeter:

- 614-466-9628

- Rep54@ohiohouse.gov

Committee member Andrea White:

- 614-644-6008
- Rep36@OhioHouse.gov

Committee member Tim Barhorst:

- 614-466-1507
- Rep85@OhioHouse.gov

Committee member Meredith Craig:

- 614-466-1474
- Rep77@OhioHouse.gov

Committee member Jennifer Gross:

- 614-466-8550
- Rep45@OhioHouse.gov

Committee member Angie King:

- 614-466-9624
- Rep84@OhioHouse.gov

Committee member Melanie Miller:

- 614-466-0961
- Rep67@OhioHouse.gov

Share this article: ["Ohio violence prevention advocates worry that teens who have been sexually abused would have to get parental consent to get emergency and temporary mental health services under proposed legislation"](#)

INFO FOR ANYONE TESTIFYING IN-PERSON ON 11/19:

1.) Arrive at the Statehouse before the committee is scheduled to begin.

- Park either in the garage underneath the Statehouse or the Columbus Commons Parking Garage.
- Note: you'll need to go through a metal detector when you arrive.
- You can ask the security guards to direct you to the committee room where your hearing is being held (Room 121)

2.) Bring a printed copy of your testimony with you to read in front of the committee (You do **not have to read your testimony word for word).**

3.) You may also want to bring copies to hand to reporters – you can contact reporters ahead of time to let them know you (and your group) will be testifying!

4.) AFTER YOU'RE FINISHED SPEAKING:

- **Legislators may ask you questions.** They are more likely to ask questions if you provide data/statistics or present yourself as having professional experience related to the bill. This can be awesome! But be prepared to back up your testimony!
- **After each question, try to start your response with "Chair, Representative..."**

AFTER THE COMMITTEE:

After the committee is over, we also recommend taking some additional steps to increase the impact of your testimony:

- **Contact the committee members** (be polite!), remind them about your testimony, and offer to meet/speak with them to discuss the issue further.
 - [SPREADSHEET: State House & Senate CONTACT Information](#) (2025 - 2026)
 - Check out the tabs to find contact info for the committee where you testified
- **Find your testimony on the committee website**, and share it on social media!
 - Urge others to contact the committee too
 - [How to find testimonies online after a committee hearing](#)
 - All written and in-person testimonies are posted online and shareable
- **Create a video clip** of yourself testifying, and share it on social media!
 - Urge others to contact the committee too
 - [How to pull video clips from OhioChannel.org](#)

MESSAGING SUGGESTIONS:

- If a child is being abused by a parent or guardian, 30 days of mental health care without parental consent may be their only opportunity to seek help. **That's why this current law exists.**
- **Let's be very clear:** Child abusers are the only people who would benefit from HB 172

PROBLEMS WITH HB 172 — from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Ohio chapter:

- Currently, under Ohio law (ORC 5122.04), minors aged 14 and older are able to obtain a limited number of mental health sessions without their parents' consent. These sessions must stop after either six sessions or 30 days (whichever occurs sooner).
 - HB 172 proposes to remove ORC 5122.04 from Ohio law.
- **While this is not a service that is frequently utilized, it is used in unique and often critical circumstances. Some examples:**
 - There are instances in which a minor and/or mental health provider wants the parents to be involved in care, but simply cannot reach the parents/parents do not respond.
 - In other circumstances, this law is used when a minor is experiencing mental health symptoms, but their parents won't take them to obtain services, leaving them without care at all.
 - Other times these handfuls of sessions are used when a minor needs to simply process an event, experience, or thought to help wrap their minds around the situation prior to bringing it to their parents - either because they do not feel safe telling their parents or because they simply are not ready to share it with their parents.

- **Removing this law, which has been in place for 36 years, will leave many vulnerable youth in Ohio without necessary mental health access.**
 - Every individual should have the right to choose if, when, and how they receive care, even if that individual is a minor.
 - Youth are entitled to autonomy and self-determination for their mental health services.
- Common arguments in favor of this bill include "protecting parents rights." **However, this proposed bill revokes the rights and autonomy of youth to receive services** while leaving little change for parents rights.
 - **This law does not lessen the importance of a parent's place in their child's well-being, as youth who have the support of their parent have greater improvements in outcomes.** However, it is simply not possible for all parents and guardians to be involved at times — so ORC 5122.04 provides a safety net for youth by easy access to initial mental health services.
 - **REMINDER:** While receiving services as a minor, providers are still bound by mandated reporting requirements for abuse, neglect, and threat of harm to self or others
- **Brief overview of Ohio HB 172 (and its identical twin SB 274):**
 - HB172 proposes to remove Ohio Revised Code 5122.04, which allows a short period of outpatient services for minors without knowledge or consent of a parent or guardian.
 - ORC 5122.04 has been in law since July 1st, 1989 (almost 36 years)
 - ORC 5122.04 allows minors 14+ to receive mental health services for six sessions or thirty days, whichever comes soonest.
 - No medication can be prescribed during this time, and parent(s) are not financially responsible for any payments for service.
 - ORC 5122.04 does not change mandated reporting requirements nor lessen the importance of a parent's role in a child's well-being.