

Senate Education Committee
SB333 – Opponent
February 8th, 2018

Dear Senators,

I am really saddened to hear that all our hard work is about to be undone. If the schools would have cared in the first place, we wouldn't have had to take time off to come and appear in front of the committee. Why would you change a law that costs nothing to the school's budget but could save a life? If you give control back to the schools I fear that they will do nothing. My 4.7 grade point average, student council and very kind, caring and talented young lady decided the pressures were too great and killed herself. If you have read prior testimony the schools said they were not trained to handle mental health issues, but they handle all other medical problems. I can't say enough that I was afraid this would happen, and they would try to gain control of this training. If you have not lost a child or grandchild, then you can't imagine the pain you are constantly in. What we wanted to do was to get training to the people who has our children 40 hours in a week. We feel if they know the signs then maybe they can call for help. This problem is not going away. We can't hide our heads in the sand and survive this problem. It is at epidemic proportions. This law wasn't to place blame but to train teachers and schools how to handle this delicate situation. I feel that anyone who deals with teenagers should be trained just like we trained for CPR. I would hate for anyone to live our hell. Not one day goes by that my heart doesn't ache for my daughter or for my granddaughter who died. Our grief is beyond belief and it never ends. Why are the schools so afraid of this law that they want to take control over it? Right now, it costs the schools nothing. 1 hour is nothing. CPR takes 8 hours of training. No one is exempt. Anytime and anyone could decide to kill themselves. I truly hope you leave this law as it stands. To the people that want to change it I pray you never lose anyone to suicide because you would not be using our Senators time and money to change this law. All I can say is shame on you. We came up with a solution to help the students who are still alive. How many teenagers do we have to lose before we make mental health a priority instead of trying to crush it. If the students are not in their chairs you can't teach them. Dear Senators please leave this law alone. You voted with us the last time and you told us you would help us but now you want to change it. I wish I was. Able to be there in person because I feel live testimony is better than letters. I would hate to feel w3 are taking steps backwards instead of moving forward. Please review all the consequences of your vote. Do the right thing. Vote to keep the Jason Flatt Act intact. God Bless all.

Thank you for your time again.

Helen Rentz

Grand mother of Sara Prideaux

Mother of Allie Doss

Widow to two husbands who committed suicide.