



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2858		DATE: 4/23/2024	
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Public Policy			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CATHERINE A. KUSH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
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CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ckush@prodigy.net		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 2:47 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The complexity of health care within our school systems is overwhelming. Students present with significant, complex medical issues and numerous psycho-social issues to include psychiatric issues. It is imperative that licensed nurses (RN's) work in tandem with mental health care professionals to address the overwhelming needs of the students. I currently work in an economically challenged middle school and the needs of these students is significant. The issues they deal with daily affects not only their physical health but their mental health as well. There is a profound effect on their ability to learn, to interact with their peers, and the faculty and staff that attempt to support them. On a day to day basis, even as a seasoned nurse, I am faced with tremendous challenges trying to address the multitude of needs these students have. There is a definite lack of adequate support, most specifically mental health professionals to help guide appropriate resources, interventions and overall support for the students, faculty/staff and especially the families to get the assistance and guidance they need to make a positive impact on their day to day lives. There is a very strong interrelationship between the physical issues and the mental, psycho-social issues that define the growth, development and ultimate outcomes for these students. The students deserve the best possible resources to help them become healthy, wholesome and responsible adults. Please pass this bill for the benefit of future generations.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: COLE GRIFFIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: cgriffin2@kcpublicschools.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 3:59 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As a licensed mental health clinician for KCPS, I believe it is imperative that each school in MO have the resources they need to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their students. While school counselors often provide the needed services as far as academic and career planning, a LICENSED mental health professional (i.e. social workers, LMSW or LCSW) is necessary to provide suicide screenings, risk assessment, and clinical support that school counselors are not equipped for. Truly providing mental health resources means having access to highly specialized workers that know what to do when encountering suicidality, domestic violence, and abuse.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DR. KIA TURNER ED.D		PHONE NUMBER: 913-335-0157	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: RED APPLE EDCO		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
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EMAIL: kia@redappleedco.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 4:31 PM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Red Apple EdCo has been on the front line of mental health support in public schools in Jackson County. Our organization provides licensed mental health support to children and their parents no questions asked. We have seen firsthand how the lack of available on site mental health support has impacted student behavior, parent behavior, school culture/climate, and overall achievement. We believe that not only should there be a state budget allocation for school systems to hire qualified mental health professionals, where that is not possible we believe that school systems should be allowed to redirect those funds to partners that provide in person licensed mental health support until a more permanent solution can be found by the school system. I think we all can agree that student mental health is a huge need right now; however, leaving it to school systems to determine how to raise the funds needed is unfair to all children. We request that this bill get your votes so that Missouri students can receive the therapeutic interventions they need to go out and live healthy successful lives.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ERIKA POGUE		PHONE NUMBER:	
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CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: erikapoguern@yahoo.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 9:30 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am writing to you not only as a registered nurse but also as a coach, educator, and parent deeply committed to the mental and physical health of our children and communities. I wish to express my wholehearted support for this bill, which proposes vital amendments to enhance the availability of school nurses and mental health professionals in our public schools. As a healthcare professional, I have witnessed firsthand the critical difference that timely and proficient health interventions can make in young lives. Schools are not just centers for academic education but are also crucial environments for social and emotional development. Implementing this bill would mean providing our children with consistent access to qualified health professionals who can recognize and address their needs quickly and efficiently. My personal experiences further reinforce my support for this bill. My eldest daughter has battled depression, a journey that has been one of the most challenging aspects of our lives. Despite my professional background, tending to her needs reminded me how difficult and helpless navigating healthcare can be and how essential accessible, professional mental health resources are for our children. Many families are not equipped with the knowledge or resources to manage these challenges alone, and school can be a critical point of intervention. With DESE's oversight to ensure that these positions maintain their specialized focus, we can significantly enhance the quality of care and support our children receive. This bill not only aligns with the best practices of health and educational outcomes but also represents a proactive approach to fostering healthier, more resilient future generations. Therefore, I urge the committee to pass this bill, thereby committing to the health and well-being of children across Missouri. Investing in their health is investing in their future, and in our own. Thank you for considering this testimony.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GREGG BUSH, RN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gabush75@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 4:04 PM
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Nurses in schools help create safe and effective learning by supporting a healthy environment. They ensure teachers can focus on teaching. It is in the state's interests to promote a safe and healthy environment for students and teachers. Nurses and school nurses are uniquely qualified to support children and their teachers preparing to be productive members of the 21st Century.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JEANETTE THOMAS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jeanettekthomas@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 5:37 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Across our nation, children and families are experiencing a mental health crisis. This impact is far-reaching: from individual family units to education to violence to civic stability, to name just a few. The State of Missouri must take action on engaging with this issue -- it simply can't wait. And while this legislation will only partially begin to address our deep challenges, it's a strategic and important first step. I ask that you vote in favor of this legislation.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JESSICA HOEHNE		PHONE NUMBER:
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EMAIL: hoehnejd@health.missouri.edu	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/23/2024 8:11 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As a nurse and mother of a child in the public school system, school nurses and mental health professionals are needed now more than ever. Children are exposed to so many negative aspects of our society that they need additional support. Suicide amongst children and adolescents has sky rocketed in the last decade and not all children have the support at home to assist during a crisis. In many cases, their home life contributes to the crisis. By having these roles present in schools that demonstrate a great need, this will save our next generation and could provide them a successful path forward.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: KYNA IMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-651-1185	
REPRESENTING: MO NURSES ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 1483			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 4/23/2024 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL A. RADER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mar5r23@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 3:06 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Our teachers, and students alike, are begging for help. Both are currently ill-equipped to handle the quickly changing landscape of K-12 education. The increasing pressures being placed on both our teachers and our students is leading to increasing anguish within our schools. This bill is a small, but important, step in the right direction to getting our schools the help they need. Mental and physical wellbeing are the basic foundational blocks for a strong academic wellbeing. This investment will only strengthen Missouri's ability to educate our children and produce well acclimated and high functioning adults.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: Onesuegibson@protonmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/20/2024 10:31 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SUZANNE OPPERMAN, APRN PMHNP CADC		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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EMAIL: suzannesmentalhealthwellness@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/22/2024 5:58 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

As a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and Addiction therapist I support House Bill 2858. This Bill would improve the mental and physical health of children the position of "School Nurse Financial Supplement Fund" and the "School Mental Health Professional Financial Supplement Fund". I treat many adults who were abused by lack of parental attention, poor hygiene, lack of medical and psychiatric evaluations. These now adults suffer from childhood trauma which has been proven to lead to significant mental health instability and often leads to addiction. They don't know how to stop feeling emotional pain. Let's stop "shutting the barn door after the horse is out" by providing care and support to children who would grow up and become addicts due to issues that could be evaluated and treated sooner in a child's life.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC "HONEST ABE" DIENOFF, STATE PUBLIC ADV		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 4/23/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: libertytree.cottage976@passinbox.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/21/2024 8:50 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I OPPOSE HB 2858 as introduced. I oppose lines 30 and 31 on page 2 that read, "The department of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate rules and regulations for the implementation of this section." This is like giving DESE a "blank check". I oppose line 33 on page 2 that reads, "...primarily perform duties associated with student health...". How much more vague can you get?? This language is way too ambiguous. I oppose lines 31 and 32 on page 3 that read, "The department of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate rules and regulations for the implementation of this section." This is like giving DESE a "blank check". I oppose line 34 on page 3 that reads, "...primarily perform duties associated with student mental health...". How much more vague can you get?? This language is way too ambiguous. There are many terms and phrases in this bill that need to be much more narrowly specified and defined. I think our elected representatives in the House need to make the rules pertaining to this bill, not a department of unelected bureaucrats (DESE).