

Call to Action: HB822

1 message

Rob Watson <SAMLN@saom.memberclicks.net>
Reply-To: samrw@sammt.org
To: samks@sammt.org

Mon, Apr 17, 2023 at 9:26 AM

Dear SAMLN 23,

We could really use your help, either today or tomorrow.

[HB822](#) is stuck in the Senate Public Health committee. A reminder that HB822 is a bill that seeks to address issues related to mental health services in schools. There are a couple of great things about this bill:

1. The bill places the management of CSCT back under the guidance of DPHHS, where it will be more appropriately managed. It removes OPI from the process of reporting and reimbursement.
2. The bill encourages DPHHS to follow an MTSS model for identification of students who are in need of services. This closely aligns with what is already happening in schools and the identification process will be more consistent. In addition, it helps DPHHS look beyond just services for Tier 3 students and encourages the idea that Tier 1 programs can help improve the school environment for all.
3. The bill will create an inventory and repository of "best practices" in school based mental health services. This inventory will help to guide DPHHS as they seek to change and adapt their funding structures to what works best in schools. (Think broader than just CSCT.)
4. The bill opens the door to medicaid reimbursement for all medicaid eligible students, not just IEP students - when the services are tied to behavioral health. Currently, MT schools can only request reimbursement for IEP kids. This would allow reimbursement for any kid who is medicaid eligible. Statewide it is estimated that over 40% of our kids are eligible for medicaid.

CSCT does not work for everyone and there are plenty of other models out there that can help schools. This bill expands opportunities (and potential funding) for mental health services in schools. Many legislators are confused about the potential benefits of mental health services and quite frankly don't believe these resources are needed in schools. During testimony I explained that behavioral health services help keep students engaged in school, when they can self regulate and learn to manage their own emotions.

Sample Testimony:

Dear <Insert Name> or Members of Senate Public Health,

Please consider a "yes" vote for HB822. This bill will provide guidance and resources for behavioral health services in MT public schools. These services are desperately needed in our schools today. Students who are in need and who receive these school-based services are more likely to stay engaged in school and experience academic success. If you have any concerns or questions about the necessity for these important services, please let me know. Thank you and please vote green on HB822.

Feel free to use the sample testimony OR any of the talking points above. Putting it in your own words would be beneficial.

If you have a personal connection to any of these members - please reach out to them directly. We are hearing that some of the democrats may not understand the bill: Senator Gross (Billings), Senator Webber (Browning), Senator Kelker (Billings). We will need every democrat, as well as a few republicans, to get this passed.

Here is the site to send a message - either to the entire committee or to individual members. PLEASE DO THIS TODAY OR EARLY TOMORROW. Thanks, Rob

SEND A MESSAGE: <https://leg.mt.gov/web-messaging/>

Committee Members

Member	Assignment
Tom McGillvray (R) SD 23	Chair
Kathy Kelker (D) SD 24	Vice Chair
Dennis R Lenz (R) SD 27	Vice Chair
Becky Beard (R) SD 40	Member
Carl Glimm (R) SD 2	Member
Jen Gross (D) SD 25	Member
Steve Hinebauch (R) SD 18	Member
Brad Molnar (R) SD 28	Member

Susan Webber (D) SD 8	Member
Madelyn Krezowski	Legislative Branch Staffer
Trudy Burke	Secretary

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