

March 16, 2021

Public Testimony

S.B. 1 AN ACT EQUALIZING COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS TO MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

Good Day Senator, Abrams, Representative Steinberg, Senator Anwar, Senator Kushner, Representative Gilchrest, Senator Hwang, Senator Somers, and Honorable Members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Nancy Kettner, I am the Medical Administrative Assistant / Office Manager at the Newtown Middle School-School Based Health Center in Newtown, CT, which is operated by Connecticut Institute For Communities, Inc. (Greater Danbury Community Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center).

I appreciate the opportunity to present written testimony on *SB1 An Act Equalizing Comprehensive Access to Mental, Behavioral and Physical Health Care in Response to the Pandemic*.

Working with the middle school students at Newtown Middle School, has been a rewarding experience for me. I work with a Nurse Practitioner and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and we provide medical and behavioral health to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Our staff is nurturing and caring, and the students feel safe coming to us for medical and behavioral health services. The school nurses and guidance counselors refer students to our practice so we can help them during the school day. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, we offered Telehealth visits. We also offered Covid-19 testing for the Newtown schools and their families. Every school should have a School Based Health Center! The kids need us!!!

Please see a few testimonials below that the Newtown Middle School students wrote:

“The School Based Health Center has helped me talk about my feelings more and made me feel more comfortable around people. Since coming here, I have felt better about myself and feel as if I am a new person”.

“They understand all of your problems and help”.

“Safe, Express, Help, Honest, Accepting”

“I think the School Based Health Center is so good. Anyone who goes into that office including myself, feels so safe. They really know how to put a smile on your face”.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express how important the School Based Health Center is to our students!

Thank you  
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