

Testimony of

Courtney Leivers

Groton Educator

Before the

Public Health Committee & Committee on Children

Re:

HB 5001 - AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

February 25, 2022

Good morning members of the Public Health Committee and Committee on Children. Thank you for holding this public hearing to discuss mental health supports for our students. I support the many provisions in HB 5001 and SB 2 that address the student mental health crisis in our schools, especially those relating to staffing support and ensuring classroom teachers have greater input in resources available to students in crisis.

The proposed legislation enhances the recruitment and staffing of social workers but, for the sake of our students, I want to ensure that these provisions will also apply to school counselors, psychologists, special educators, and other certified specialists.

What You Don't See, but as an educator, I see every day, is the impact that trauma has on my students and my school.

Inadequate facilities/classroom for students with special needs. Minimally qualified paraprofessionals chasing students down the hall; banging on walls and wailing or screaming sounds heard in adjacent rooms; fights breaking out once a month and usually posted or instigated on social media; students addicted to their phones; security breaches in school; after school or sports events having a fight break out.

Thank you for addressing these critical issues impacting our students, our educators, and our school communities.