



DATE: March 21, 2022

TO: Education Committee

FROM: Amanda Brenner, Intern, The Alliance

RE: H.B. 5322 An Act Concerning the Creation of a Human Services Permit and a Requirement That School Social Workers Conduct Home Visits During the School Year

Representative Sanchez, Senator McCrory, Representative McCarty, Senator Berthel and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

My name is Amanda Brenner and I am an MSW student at the UConn School of Social work and the Public Policy Intern at the Connecticut Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance). The Alliance is the statewide advocacy organization representing nonprofits. Community nonprofits provide essential services to over half a million individuals and families in Connecticut every year, improving the quality of life in communities across the State.

I am testifying with comments on H.B. 5322 An Act Concerning the Creation of a Human Services Permit and a Requirement That School Social Workers Conduct Home Visits During the School Year.

Nonprofits are already providing in-school and home visit mental health services. Instead of adding additional work to the social worker's plate, we ask that you contract with the pre-existing infrastructure provided by nonprofits.

We respectfully request that the Committee consider bolstering the foundation on which mental health services are provided – a foundation based on community services that has eroded over time due to chronic underfunding.

To be clear: there is no way to address the children's mental health crisis without addressing the chronic underfunding of the existing services provided by nonprofits. The legislature's commitment to children's mental health must extend to the appropriations process and must increase funding for community nonprofit services rather than give additional responsibilities to social workers.

We urge you to oppose these proposals that do not make use of existing infrastructure. Thank you for your consideration.