



Public Children Services Association of Ohio

510 E. Mound Street • Suite 200 • Columbus, Ohio 43215
614/224-5802 • FAX 614/228-5150 • E-mail address: pcsao@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.pcsao.org

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Senate Education Committee

Supportive Testimony SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 79 Representative Tom Raga, Sponsor

Greg Kapcar
October 18, 2005

Good afternoon Chairwoman Padgett and members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Greg Kapcar and I am the Assistant Legislative Director of the Public Children Services Association of Ohio. PCSAO represents the 88 public child protection agencies here in Ohio, working for safe children, stable families and supportive communities. On behalf of the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you to support Amended Substitute House Bill 79 sponsored by Representative Raga.

I would like to thank Representative Raga, the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for working with us over the summer on the section of the bill that requires information from a public children services agency to be submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. In particular, as a result of this bill, information is submitted regarding the agency's investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect involving a person licensed by the State Board of Education where the agency has determined that child abuse or neglect occurred.

Currently, when a public children services agency receives a referral of abuse or neglect on anyone, the agency conducts an assessment of risk to the child and an investigation when necessary. The information gathered in the process is confidential and the identity of the reporter is never revealed.

In the interest of protecting children and preventing a teacher from moving to a new district and putting more children at risk, PCSAO worked with the Ohio Department of Education on providing specific information to aid the Department of Education in its own investigation into a teacher where the agency has determined that the teacher has abused or neglected a child.

PCSAO supports Substitute House Bill 79 as public policy that strikes a balance between the best interest of children – helping to protect them from abuse and neglect; and protecting confidential, sensitive, personal information about children and their families. Thank you for the opportunity to voice our support today. I would be happy to respond to any questions at this time.