

President – Tony GiaQuinta, MD, FAAP
Vice President – Emily Scott, MD, FAAP
Secretary/Treasurer – Meagan O’Neill, MD, FAAP
Past President – Sarah Bosslet, MD, FAAP
Executive Director – Christopher Weintraut, JD



January 12, 2020

The Honorable Ron Grooms
Indiana Statehouse
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

Re: Senate Bill 62

Dear Senator Grooms and Members of the Committee on Family and Children Services,

On behalf of over 900 pediatricians, pediatric subspecialists, and pediatric nurse practitioners throughout Indiana, I write today to recognize the concern at the heart of Senate Bill 62. There is no doubt that psychotropic medications should be prescribed with caution – especially for a population as vulnerable as children within the Department of Child Services. However, our organization also believes that Senate Bill 62 as it is written would not benefit the kids it aims to serve.

As the primary care providers for most of the children in Indiana’s foster care system, our members are very familiar with the barriers these kids face to receiving the health care they need. One of the biggest barriers they face is a shortage of mental health care providers who serve this particular population. Passing Senate Bill 62 before addressing this shortage could result in the unintended consequence of making it harder or even impossible for certain children to receive the medication they need.

INAAP absolutely supports efforts to ensure children and youth in foster care are being treated appropriately with psychotropic medications. However, we also believe working together on a more comprehensive solution will be required. By bringing together DCS, Indiana’s pediatric clinicians, and state lawmakers, I believe we can find a solution that will open lines of communication between DCS and primary care providers and will allow for effective review and oversight of the prescribing of psychotropic medications.

In lieu of passing this bill, our organization supports and encourages well-defined efforts to streamline the collaboration and care for these vulnerable children and youth and to provide mental and behavioral health consultation to primary care providers and medical homes across Indiana. I hope you will consider analyzing this issue further through a summer study committee, and I offer our organization’s expertise and experience in any way it may be helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony GiaQuinta'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Tony GiaQuinta, MD FAAP
President, Indiana Chapter of the
American Academy of Pediatrics