

Hon. Adrian Dix
Minister of Health
Room 337 Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4
HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Hon. Judy Darcy
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Room 346 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
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July 2, 2020

Dear Minister Dix & Minister Darcy:

RE: *Bill 22-2020, Mental Health Amendment Act*

We are writing on behalf of Disability Alliance BC (DABC) to express our concern about *Bill 22-2020, Mental Health Amendment Act*, introduced in the legislature on June 23, 2020.

Our understanding is that the bill contains proposed amendments to the *Mental Health Act* that would allow designated hospitals in the province to authorize involuntary detention of youth following a substance overdose. While we appreciate that the bill has been introduced in an effort to protect youth who are at high risk due to substance use, we fear it may result in detention of young persons without due process. We share the concerns already raised by the Representative for Children and Youth about involuntary care, particularly without proper safeguards for those that want to challenge their detention. We are troubled that bill does not appear to ensure that detainees would be provided with independent legal advice, particularly after the government committed to establishing this important service on the recommendation of the BC Ombudsperson.

We are also concerned that the bill appears to be moving forward too quickly without adequate stakeholder consultation. We hope that the government will reconsider, and engage with affected communities and advocacy organizations before proceeding.

We look forward to the opportunity to participate in further discussions about this issue.

Sincerely,

Erin Pritchard
Executive Director: Policy & Programs

Andrew Robb
Staff Lawyer

c. Hon. David Eby, Q.C., Attorney General
Jennifer Charlesworth, BC Representative for Children and Youth