

**ASCENT**
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

ATTACHMENT 6
3/10/2020

Senator Martin

I am writing to express concern over HB340a. I have heard many concerns from other parties regarding safety and reporting, however one concern that I have that has not been discussed is the legislature labeling this as a 'pilot program'. Every pilot program I have ever been involved with has clearly defined parameters, periodic oversight and reporting, and objectives to see if the pilot can be pushed out to treatment providers that would like to provide the service. I am not seeing any of these traits in the HB340a pilot project.

My other concern in labeling this program a pilot project by the State is the false sense of security this may give to parents and children taking part in the pilot program. When the State labels this program as a pilot program most reasonable parents will think there is oversight, strict guidelines, a new best practice program to be evaluated, and a safe environment for their child. This is not what I am seeing with this pilot program. In the treatment world you would never mix adults and adolescents in any way. Evaluations would be completed by licensed professionals trained in ASAM placement criteria. All staff working in this environment would take and pass the State's background check. These are basic safety precautions. As basic as putting a young child in a car seat. If you do not abide by basic safety practices you are endangering the lives of children and it is not a matter of if an adverse incident will happen but more of when it will happen.

Bottom line is that labeling HB340a as a pilot project in its current form is misleading. Misleading to parents that will assume there is oversight and safety measures in place to protect their child. Misleading to the treatment world that this is a pilot with measurable goals and objectives to be replicated throughout the State if measured outcomes are favorable when there are no specified clearly defined measured outcomes.

Respectfully,
Darren Richman



Darren Richman
LLC Member / CFO
Ascent Behavioral Health Services
366 SW 5th Ave. Suite 100
Meridian, ID 83642