



Students for Patient Advocacy Nationwide

2644 Clifford St,
Alvin, TX, 77511
www.spanationwide.org

The Honorable VanderWall, Chair

Michigan State House Committee on Health Policy
State Capitol, 124 N. Capitol Ave, Lansing, MI 48933

Position Letter: HB 4219 (Voluntary Mental Health Treatment) - Support

Dear Chair VanderWall and Members of the Michigan State House Committee on Health Policy,

Students for Patient Advocacy Nationwide represents and argues for increased patient rights protections across the country.

We are writing to express our strong support for HB 4219 and to thank the committee for its consideration of this important legislation. We are especially grateful to Representative Thompson for sponsoring this patient-centered bill.

HB 4219 introduces a crucial update to the Michigan Mental Health Code by requiring that individuals voluntarily entering mental health treatment are clearly informed of their right to end treatment, both verbally and in writing, at the beginning of care.

This includes providing a copy of the termination form described in Section 419 of the Code, which patients and their advocates may use to formally conclude treatment if they so choose.

Ensuring that patients receive this information at intake promotes transparency, strengthens informed consent, and protects patient autonomy. This update helps prevent situations in which patients, especially those in vulnerable or distressed states, are unaware of their right to withdraw from care, potentially leading to longer or unwanted stays in treatment.

The bill also improves communication by requiring that a copy of the consent and termination form be given not only to the patient, but also to the individual who signed the written consent and to a third person chosen by the patient. This helps ensure that all involved parties understand the patient's rights and available options from the outset.

Importantly, HB 4219 maintains the discretion of providers while enhancing patient protections. It provides clarity and consistency across institutions, which can help reduce legal ambiguity and liability by standardizing the process for informing patients of their rights. It also reduces the burden on patients and families, particularly those without legal counsel or advocacy support.

This legislation is especially meaningful for historically underserved groups, such as individuals from low-income communities or those who speak languages other than English. By standardizing the provision of rights-related documentation and eliminating the need to request it, HB 4219 ensures that equitable access to information is part of every patient's care experience.

We believe that mental health care should be guided by dignity, transparency, and trust. HB 4219 reflects these values by ensuring patients are treated not just with compassion, but with the respect and clarity they deserve.

We thank the committee for its consideration of HB 4219 and respectfully ask for your support in advancing this legislation. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.



Shayan Saqib
Shayansaqib59@gmail.com
Executive Director, SPAN



Vishank Panchbhavi
Vishpancbbhavi@gmail.com
Executive Director, SPAN



Joel Blessan
Joelvblessan@gmail.com
Executive Director, SPAN