

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Human Services
For HB 2216

Compiled on: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 5:06 PM

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Hearing Date: March 25, 2025 8:00 AM

Terri Carriker
Protect Texas Fragile Kids
Austin, TX

Protect Texas Fragile Kids is in support of HB2216

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Tina Freeman
self/retired District Clerk
Lockhart, TX

My name is Tina Freeman, and I support this bill. I'd like to address several things in particular, one of which is amending 7 days to 30 if the attorney for the parent requests an extension. Attorneys are often unprepared for the adversary hearing, and it's imperative that they are prepared for this hearing. Secondly, parents should have access to ALL their medical records, and this should include results of all drug testing. In some counties, parents are not allowed to see the results of their drug tests. They are considered a "donor" instead of a patient, since CPS pays for the tests. I had a member of the DFPS complaint department say that clients shouldn't even be provided a copy by the caseworker. (My daughter was involved with the department in 2020 after a domestic violence incident. After FINALLY receiving part of her records TWO years later, it was documented that there was a "lab mix-up" with her initial test, with no further information. Her first test was the only positive test throughout that case, and set the tone for access to her children the entire time.) Unfortunately, proper procedures are not always followed, and I spent quite a bit of time discussing the process with Quest Labs, Texas Alcohol & Drug Testing Serv., the Medical Review Office, and others.

Lastly, in one section of the bill, it mentions "serious emotional or physical injury". What defines emotional abuse, let alone SERIOUS emotional abuse? If denying an ice cream treat or time outs for a misbehaving child can be considered emotional abuse in some counties (recent case in the panhandle), this is concerning. Em.abuse is grounds for removal and termination. Family Code 261.001 has limited language and is vague when it comes to what constitutes emotional abuse. Yet the Texas Administrative Code expands on it (707.453), and states that diagnosis by a medical or mental health professional is NOT required. In 2022, there were over 10k allegations of emotional abuse in Texas.