

Submitter: Zahra Malikshah  
On Behalf Of: Hb3835  
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3835

Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Zahra Malikshah. I am a former foster youth, an assistant manager at Project Lemonade, and a youth policy advocate. I am here today to strongly oppose HB 3835 because it weakens protections for foster youth and allows harmful practices to continue.

This bill could:

- **Redefine Abuse Investigations:** By altering what constitutes “wrongful restraint,” the bill could allow certain harmful practices to go uninvestigated if the perpetrator claims they intended to support the child’s well-being, even if serious harm occurred.
- **Limit Abuse Investigations:** The bill restricts investigations to abuse perpetrated only by DHS-paid providers, excluding others in the home, such as a foster parent’s partner, from scrutiny.
- **Allow Harmful Restraint Practices:** The bill narrows the definition of “wrongful restraint,” potentially permitting dangerous practices like mechanical restraints and prone restraints to go uninvestigated unless they result in severe injury or death.

As someone who grew up in the foster care system, I know firsthand how dangerous these gaps can be. Foster youth deserve safety, stability, and support—not policies that make them more vulnerable.

I urge you to vote NO on HB 3835 and instead invest in real protections for foster youth.

Thank you for your time.