

Maryanne Godboldo, a mother in Michigan, noticed that pills prescribed by her daughter's doctor were making her condition worse, not better. So Mrs. Godboldo stopped giving them to her. That's when the trouble began. When Child Protective Services (CPS) bureaucrats became aware that the girl was not receiving her prescribed medication, they decided the child should be taken away from her mother's custody on grounds of medical neglect. When Ms. Godboldo refused to surrender her daughter to the state, CPS enlisted the help of a police SWAT team! On March 24 of this year a 12 hour standoff ensued and young Ariana was taken into custody. The drug involved was Risperdal, a neuroleptic antipsychotic medication with numerous known side effects. Ms. Godboldo had decided on a more holistic approach for her daughter. She is still engaged in a costly legal battle with the state over Ariana's treatment and custody.

This is one example of how government's increasing proclivity to medicate children with questionable psychiatric drugs violates the rights of parents. Just recently, the Government Accountability Office released a report on the astonishingly high rate of prescriptions for psychotropic drugs for children in the foster care system. It is absolutely astounding that nearly 40% of kids in foster care are on psychotropic drugs, some of them taking up to 5 different pills at a time. Some of these children are under one year of age - too young to safely take over the counter cold medication!

To fight this dangerous trend I reintroduced the Parental Consent Act of 2011, HR 2769, which prohibits federal funds from being used to establish or implement any universal or mandatory mental health or psychiatric screening program. The previous administration pushed hard for this type of federal intrusion into the medical decisions of families through its wildly misnamed "New Freedom Commission on Mental Health." Everyone interested in parental rights and true health freedom must fight to make sure the commission's findings and dubious psychiatric science are never used as justification to force mental health screening on American kids at school without their parents' consent.

There has been a persistent lobbying effort, funded by pharmaceutical companies, to increase the number of these prescriptions to even more children. A universal screening program is the stated goal of these lobbyists. I would not be at all surprised to see the recent attention to the issue of schoolyard bullying used as a tool towards these ends.

Imagine the potential ramifications of a universal, mandatory psychiatric health screening program in a public school, considering how some bureaucrats are wont to behave! The

diagnostic criteria for many mental illnesses remain vague and subjective. Therefore it is all too easy for a bureaucrat in a white coat to label a child with some sort of psychiatric syndrome simply because they were having a bad day, or behaving as a typical rambunctious child. That label could follow them around the rest of their school career and come with a number of prescriptions attached, which the state, as in the Godboldo case, may try to force the parents to administer, whether they want to or not.

I plan to continue the fight to ban federal funding of any universal screening program that imposes mental healthcare screening on children without express informed consent from parents.