

Anti-Bullying

WSPTA Testimony on SB 5689

2/18/19 Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee

Hello Madam Chair and Members of the Committee

I'm Corina Pfeil here today representing the Washington State PTA, and also PFLAG of Bellevue Eastside in support of this Bill.

The Washington State PTA and PFLAG recognize ALL youth have the right to feel safe and included at school & in school programs.

And; Harassment, intimidation & bullying policies that specifically mention sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are associated with youth feeling- more safe, and are associated with lower cases of bullying, and decreased incidence of targeted harassment and intimidation.

Therefore, the Washington State PTA & PFLAG support legislation and policies that create safe, supportive and accepting environments in our schools, training for educators and other school related professionals, and updating health education standards that deal with the issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

As a parent of a trans youth, I have had to become the expert. Our surrounding schools and school districts have asked me how to best address the needs of transgender students, and whom I recommend to educate staff. I've united leading organizations to support addressing a myriad of questions, our district had, and what is, the best language to use in policy. I'm happy to do this to support healthier school environments for all student youth to thrive in.

For 15 years in WA State, the HRC 162. series has continued to guide these issues for our schools & communities, and but often been overlooked in school related legislation. Therefore, this bill improves outcomes by better supporting, embracing, and specifically welcoming student intersectionality in Washington State, and is a welcome addition of specific language in this Bill.

Thank you and I'm open to your questions.