

Dear Chair Heinert and members of the House Education Committee,

My testimony is in opposition to House Bill 1488. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass. My reasons for this are several:

- 1.) As a parent with one school-age child and another soon to be in the public school system, I want my children to be able to discover for themselves their interests and talents as they grow older. I also want them to be able to seek the social and peer support that they need through various clubs, and while I certainly hope they always feel they can be open with me, I would never want that requirement to become a barrier to them securing needed peer to peer support.
- 2.) For children with abusive or challenging home environments, extracurriculars, clubs, and co-curricular activities can serve as a major protective factor – a safe place to make friends, to build self-esteem, and to have something positive to look forward to. I personally know people who relied on these various school activities to get them through middle and high school at a time when home was not a safe or emotionally nurturing environment. Requiring parental permission for simple activities may create more of a barrier to participation for those who may need these activities the most.
- 3.) Lastly, I recognize that we are in a workforce shortage and that our school systems are working hard to meet the needs of their students every day. Our school already seeks parental permission when needed, but this permission simply isn't necessary for every single activity. Growing up, I could run for student council or join a student club without permission from my parents. By adding this requirement, we're creating additional administrative work for the school staff. They could instead be spending that time doing more important things and meeting the needs of our kids.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state,

Best regards,

Shannon Bacon