

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**.

1. This Bill Creates an Unnecessary Administrative Burden

Each school district, as you may know, governs their own policies around student clubs. While it varies, many clubs already do require parental permission. Any club that takes fees or travels, as an example, typically requires parental permission. These laws or bylaws are often constructed to give students a level of autonomy, except where involvement would require a parent. The statues I've read on this often read to me as fairly common sense.

2. This Bill has Unintended Impacts on GSAs and Student Safety

While I suspect the bill sponsors are trying to prevent underground chess clubs, they failed to realize how this could be used to prohibit Gender Sexuality Alliances for parents who were abusive or prohibitive to their LGBTQ+ youth. Or where LGBTQ+ Youth perceived their parents to not be safe. We see both play out in the data below:

LGBTQ+ Access to mental health care ([Trevor Project](#))

- 40% Wanted and received care
- 60% Wanted but did not receive care
 - 45% Concerns with obtaining parent/caregiver permission
 - 20% Lack of parent/caregiver permission

North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey ([YRBS](#))

Mental Health and Parents	Trans	LGB	straight
Qn114 - Youth who would talk to their parents if feeling sad, empty, hopeless, angry or anxious	5.6%	7.5%	22.2%
Qn87- Youth who didn't usually sleep in parents or guardians home in the last thirty days	27.2%	7.3%	2.3%
Qn111 - Youth kicked out, ran away, or abandoned	20.0%	5.9%	2.7%
Qn115 - Youth whose parents swore at or put them down one or more times within 12 months of survey	72.2%	71.6%	44.6%

Impacts of GSAs ([Clinical Research](#)) ([National Surveys](#))

- Serves as Pprotective factor against suicide
- Less absenteeism
- Improved Grades

3. Parental and Youth Rights Need to Be Carefully Weighed

Expanding Parental Rights seems like a no brainer when we look at the incredible and amazing parents who compassionately advocate for and show their youth support. For the kids who have experienced abuse, expanding parental rights is about the most horrible thing you can imagine.

In terms of the states compelling interest, please consider the rights parents currently enjoy, the necessitude in expanding them here, and the potential for harm it may have on youth.

It is with these three considerations that I urge you to vote **Do Not Pass**. Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state,

Best regards,
Faye Seidler