

Senate Education Committee
March 14th, 2023 HB 1488
Testimony in Opposition

Dear Chair Elkin and the members of the Senate Education Committee,

I urge a “Do Not Pass” on HB 1488.

- This bill doesn’t achieve the purported goal Rep. Koppelman describes
- In practice would create nightmare of paperwork and harm disenfranchised kids
- There is no benefit to this bill in its current form and needlessly attempts to take away local control from schools.

While introduced by Representative Marschall as the primary sponsor, he said that he has spoken to no school or parent about this bill and deferred to Representative Koppelman. Rep. Koppelman then spent about fifteen minutes explaining that the intention of this bill was twofold.

1. A tool for better parenting
2. A means to understand where their kid was after school.

At neither point did either representative give any reason to why parental permission on joining clubs was required to achieve the goal of understanding where kids were after school. A kid getting a signature to join a club doesn’t solve that problem. They can still get a signature for the chess club, then ditch that club and do whatever.

This bill proposes to create an enormous administrative burden to micromanage every single club, when that is strictly not necessarily. Rep. Koppelman makes a fantastic point that after school clubs are optional. No kids are forced into optional after school clubs, unlike the requirement for kids to be in school that Rep. Koppelman makes several times.

So, why would parental permission become required for this or the solution to knowing where kids are? Parents can ask their child, they can bring children home after school or demand it, kids can skip the clubs they get permission to be in. None of this solves any problem. The bill has no teeth or punitive measure, so would this not be better suited as a resolution?

North Dakota has always valued giving schools local control, so why is this not left up to each school district where it belongs? And if a school district deemed that parental permission was required for every single club, where does that leave our students without involved parents in their life? This bill will hurt LGBTQ+ students, but honestly it will be more devastating to the larger amount of straight, cisgender youth with absent parents in their life.

Rep. Koppelman addresses this point by suggesting that the kid in bad situations should get help from the state and it isn’t this bill's job to make school a better place for youth in those

situations. I believe that is perhaps the best reason to urge a “Do Not Pass” here, because he clearly has no idea what life is like for students, especially ones with absent or violent parents. His answer to that question during the committee hearing and the complete lack of real empathy for the impact of his bill on those youth was one of the most insulting things I’ve seen this session.

I thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state,
 Faye Seidler

Testimony Analysis

In Favor

- Just spoken by Koppelman all points above.

Opposition Key Points

- [Requiring parental permission is burdensome on school and detrimental to all children](#)
- [Parents don't feel they can talk to parents, making joining clubs difficult all students](#)
- [Could impact Gender Sexuality Alliances](#)
- [Could Endanger LGBTQ+ Students](#)

Written Testimony	Favor	Opposition
Word Count	0	3,423
Citizen	0	6
Stakeholder/Qualified*	0	7
Politician/lobbyist	1	0
Total 14	1	13
	7.14%	92.86%
In person testimony Mins	20	5
Total Minutes 25	80.00%	20.00%

Committee Vote	Do pass	Don't pass
Total 14	10	4
	71.43%	28.57%

Floor Vote	Yay	Nay
Total 91	53	38
	58.24%	41.76%

*Stakeholder/Qualified for this bill was determined individuals testifying specifically as parents, school workers, or therapists.