

Chairman Heinert

Members of the House Education Committee

I am writing in support of HB 1247, an issue which addresses the rights and safety of our schools in relation to sexual assault.

“First and foremost, the safety and well-being of a student sexual assault victim must remain a top priority. Allowing a juvenile sex offender to attend the same school as their victim creates an environment of fear and anxiety for the victim which further compounds the trauma they have already endured. Schools are meant to be safe spaces for learning and growth.”

“Additionally, placing both individuals in the same school environment could escalate tensions, disrupt the school community, and potentially lead to additional harmful incidents.

“I urge the committee to consider policies which mandate alternative educational arrangements for juvenile offenders in such cases. This ensures the victim can attend school without fear while providing the offender access to education and rehabilitation in a way that minimizes risk and at the same time promotes accountability.” The burden of an assault is a major lifelong impact for the victim as well as having far reaching repercussions which need to be addressed to minimize impacts and promote prevention.

“Finally, I encourage the committee to consider proactive measures, such as enhanced counseling, restorative justice programs, and better coordination between schools and the juvenile justice system, to address these situations effectively.

“This issue impacts the broader school community. I respectfully urge the committee to adopt HB 1247 that prioritizes the safety, dignity, and future of all students.”

HB 1247 offers a firm stance on protecting the victim.

Thank you for your time today.

Richard LaFleur

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