

Chairman Ruby and House Human Services Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to HB 1144 and urge a Do Not Pass vote.

This bill is an outright attack on the dignity, rights, and humanity of transgender students. It seeks to impose discriminatory and regressive policies that not only undermine the safety and well-being of vulnerable students but also actively promotes a hostile, exclusionary environment in our schools. Let us be clear: this bill is a direct assault on the basic principles of equality, respect, and human rights.

The provision that forces teachers and school staff to disregard a student's personal gender pronouns is nothing short of cruel. To deny a student this simple act of respect is to tell them that their identity does not matter, that they do not deserve basic human dignity. This bill would institutionalize emotional harm, pushing transgender students into the shadows, erasing their identities in the very spaces where they should feel the most accepted: their schools.

The section demanding separate restroom accommodations for transgender students, requiring parental approval, is nothing more than an attempt to single out and isolate transgender children. And the author of this bill doesn't try to hide it. The absurdity of banning multi-stall gender-neutral restrooms proves it. The very existence of such restrooms reflects a commitment to the reality that not all students fit into a rigid binary. Gender is not a checkbox; it is a spectrum. By prohibiting students from using restrooms that align with their gender identity, this bill not only violates students' rights to privacy but also exposes them to potential harassment and violence. When you legislate a student's access to the bathroom based on their biological sex rather than their gender identity, you send the message that their safety doesn't matter. It sends the message that their humanity doesn't matter. And, with that, you set them up to endure state sanctioned harassment and abuse regardless of where they use the bathroom.

The bill's proponents claim to protect children, but in reality, this bill is a weapon used to harm children. It is not about fairness or safety. It is about silencing and erasing transgender voices, denying them the chance to exist openly, without shame, in the spaces where they should feel safe and supported. It is about forcing educators to become complicit in discriminatory practices that should have no place in schools. It is about sowing division and

fostering intolerance in the very institutions that are supposed to teach our children compassion, respect, and understanding.

We cannot allow this bill to become law. We cannot stand idly by while a generation of students is harmed by regressive, harmful policies that do nothing but perpetuate discrimination and fear. Schools must be a place of acceptance, not a battleground where children are pitted against each other based on arbitrary distinctions. This bill is not just wrong—it is dangerous. We must fight it with everything we have, for the sake of our children and for the future of our society.

**Thank you for your time and consideration
Christina Feldmann
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