

## Testimony in Opposition to SB 2244

Dear Senators,

I am writing to strongly oppose Senate Bill 2244. As a parent, I care deeply about the upbringing of my child. I also recognize the important role that schools play in providing a well-rounded education. I have always had the ability to discuss moral and religious topics with my family, while appreciating that my child will encounter a variety of perspectives in public school. This exposure to diverse views, traditions, and cultures is a vital part of education and helps prepare students to understand the world.

There are several provisions in this bill that I find deeply concerning:

- 1. Overburdening Teachers and Schools**

The requirement for teachers to report every single topic discussed with students is impractical and unsustainable. Educators are already committed to involving parents in their children's education, but this legislation demands an unattainable level of micromanagement. With growing class sizes, increasing school populations, and expanding responsibilities, our teachers are already stretched thin. Many talented educators are leaving the profession due to burnout, and this bill will only worsen the strain on our education system.

- 2. Erosion of Individual Rights**

This bill imposes massive restrictions on students' individual rights. Children, while under their parents' care, are still individuals with their own identities and choices. For example, the provision requiring parental consent for a child to use a name other than their legal name is overly restrictive and demeaning. Would parents need to sign off on simple nicknames? This legislation disregards students' autonomy and individuality, creating an oppressive environment that could harm their mental health.

- 3. Negative Impact on Students' Social and Emotional Well-being**

Allowing parents to remove their child from activities, assemblies, or field trips not only isolates students but also denies them important social and developmental opportunities. School is not just about academics; it is about building friendships, participating in community, and learning to navigate the broader world. These restrictive measures will only further alienate students and erode the mental health of an already struggling age group.

This bill does nothing to foster morality or improve education. Instead, it risks creating an oppressive and harmful environment for students and places an unrealistic burden on educators.

I urge you to oppose Senate Bill 2244 and instead focus on meaningful initiatives that enhance education for all students. Let's work on increasing graduation rates, supporting mental health, and creating positive learning environments. Parents should have a voice in their children's upbringing, but that voice should not come at the expense of students' individuality, rights, and educational experiences.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristin Michels

Resident of District 3