

Committee members,

I am writing in opposition of bill SB2231 for recognition of gender identity in the schools. School aged people require security, stability, and external support for guidance to development of skills required to be a functional member of society. How school aged people play, interact with peers, and are supported in social environments directly influences their skill development. When these social environments are unsupportive, that sense of dismissal can be palpable. As humans, regardless of age, we will seek to find connection in ways we feel validated. In the school systems, there are many opportunities to foster healthy external validation to guide young people to learn internal validation.

As school aged people develop their identity interacting in social environments, there's opportunity for their elders to role model ways to honor people of all walks of life. These role modeled behaviors include being kind, considerate, and compassionate. These are skills required for effective interpersonal relationships that influence people's abilities to work on teams, and be a productive citizen as they age. Recognition of one's gender identity and honoring their gender identity, promotes inclusivity through role modeling the skills mentioned above. We have an opportunity to role model to future generations, through leadership, how to be productive citizens.

By choosing to honor gender identity for people of all ages, and allowing leaders in the school to honor people of all identities, we can create social environments to guide young people. Thank you for your time and consideration of honoring people of all gender identities.