

Greetings to the assembly,

I am a concerned citizen writing in opposition to the passing of HB8 in its current form. In particular, the amended Section 3313.473.D.4.d reading: "Any request by a student to identify as a gender that does not align with the student's biological sex"

Taken in context with section 3313.473.B.2 reading: "Notify a student's parent of any change in the student's services, including counseling services, or monitoring related to the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being or the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student"

Meaning, under the current version of the bill, school staff are required to notify a student's parents of any perceived gender "nonconformity".

My concern is that the section does not currently specify protections in the unlikely, but real and documented event that divulging such information to a parent would cause undue stress or harm to the student. I would remind the assembly that adolescents who do not identify as the gender they were assigned at birth, reportedly suffer a significantly higher rate of abuse, as noted in this study:

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8344346/>

I understand that we all care about the problem of abuse and the youths that it affects. To wit, the amendment section 3313.473.B.3, in its last 2 lines, reads: "Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit

teachers from reporting unlawful abuse or neglect" - meaning that school staff already have a power and a responsibility to identify abuse and take action against it. I see this as unequivocally a good thing. We want our youths to have the strongest support system they can have. All I ask, then, is that the assembly does not lessen this power by requiring school staff to take actions that may endanger their students.

My recommendation is therefore that text be added to the amendment specifying that, in cases of known abuse or neglect, the requirement of school staff to share sensitive information is waived.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
- Dylan Kreider-Mullins