



## Johnathan Newman State Representative

Chairman Fowler-Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Education Committee, thank for the opportunity to testify in support of HB190, The Given Name Act.

The 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly passed The Parents' Bill of Rights which states, "The general assembly maintains that a parent has a fundamental right to make decisions concerning the upbringing, education, and care of" their child. HB190 adds an important detail regarding the use of transgender pronouns and names for students without the knowledge of parents. The importance of The Given Name Act has been recognized by seven other states who have passed it into law: Florida, Louisiana, Indiana, Arkansas, Alabama, Montana and North Dakota.

This bill recognizes the importance of the Parents' Bill of Rights and recognizes that more protections are needed to prevent school employees from assisting in the social transitioning of students in their gender identity against their parents' wishes.

This bill prohibits school employees from "knowingly and intentionally" addressing minor age students using a name not found on the student's birth certificate or pronoun not aligning with their biological sex without written permission of the student's parent or guardian. Any request by a student for an employee to use a transgender name or pronoun must be reported to the student's parents.

It prohibits employees from informing students of their own pronouns inconsistent with the employee's biological sex; and from requesting a student to provide their preferred name or pronouns inconsistent with the student's biological sex. It prohibits an employee from being required to address an employee or student with a name or pronoun not aligning with their biological sex.

It establishes a ten percent loss of funding for a school in violation, withheld each month until such time that the school is confirmed to be in compliance. It also allows parent or guardian to bring a cause of action for injunctive relief and reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

We wanted to ensure that no one would be in jeopardy over using a student's nickname. The bill is careful not to address use of nicknames, only prohibiting "knowingly and intentionally" using names contradicting the student's biological sex. Widely known nicknames of students or derivatives of their given names approved by parents are not prohibited.

We are happy to take your questions at this time.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnathan Newman".

Johnathan Newman  
Representative, House District 80