

Opponent Testimony for House Bill 322

[Norah Taylor](#), High School Student

State and Local Government Committee

9/21/21

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairwoman John, Ranking Member Representative Kelly, and Members of the State and Local Government Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Norah Taylor . I am a Junior at Grandview Heights High School. I strongly oppose bill HB 322.

As a high school student I oppose this bill because they limit honesty in our education. This bill prevents students from better understanding their differences in individual identity, experience and culture by limiting their education regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion. When you limit that imperative information, you are robbing students of important information that will prepare them to make future connections with diverse peoples. By limiting the honesty in our education, we create a learning environment in which students will be lied to, for the sake of pleasing those who oppose the truths. Not only does it limit the future connections students will have the tools to make, it also puts students and staff at risk. It harms our social and emotional well being by allowing truths to go unsaid, and underrepresented. This can cause students of color to believe the harmful thinking that their stories and experiences are not worth the time and effort to teach about in classrooms.

Representation matters, and by limiting education on diversity, as well as gender and sex, we are bound to send students off into the world without a clear understanding of it. Not only is it important to ensure that students and teachers learn and honor things such as pronouns and gender, it is also a matter of safety. For a student to be told by a teacher that their pronouns aren't respected due to the teacher's personal beliefs, you are telling the student that they are not valid, or heard. Students of all genders and sexualities are at risk for suicide. Suicide is the second highest cause of death from ages 10-24 (CDC). This risk increases for LGB youth seriously contemplate suicide at almost three times the rate of heterosexual youth (CDC). Students are vulnerable, and by making it an option for teachers to validate their pronouns and sexuality, you are making it an option for teachers to spread hatred and harmful rhetoric.

As a Junior in high school, I ask you to strongly consider my testimony opposing HB 322 and vote NO on this bill.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any additional questions or provide input as needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Norah Taylor

Student