

Taneeka Hansen

From: Jennifer McNichol <mcnicholj@sitkaschools.org>
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2016 2:26 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Adam Wool; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. Neal Foster
Cc: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: SB 89

Greetings, and thank you for your service in our legislature and on the House Health and Human Services Committee.

I am a mother, pediatrician, and Sitka School Board member. I am not necessarily representing the Sitka School Board (which has not recently discussed this issue) or my employer's positions in expressing my wish that you do NOT support SB 89 which will prohibit individuals affiliated with entities which, amongst their many services, may provide abortion services.

Our schools have had a difficult time providing adequate health education to our children at an appropriate age for several years now. In my work I see the consequences of this: young teens with sexually-transmitted infections (many of which can have life-long complications), unhealthy and abusive relationships, and unexpected pregnancies. These situations result directly from a lack of education and insight and we need to do all we can to rectify this. Qualified instructors are few and far between in our small communities, and the best-trained instructors are often those affiliated with health care agencies such as Planned Parenthood. The curriculum is vetted and controlled by the school and does not include the promotion of abortion. Middle school teachers seem to prefer having an outside well-trained individual provide this instruction, and, frankly, given the numerous demands of current curricula, they don't really have time to receive this training. Parents always have the ability to "opt out" and no one would suggest that that option be rescinded.

I strongly object to the idea that a vocal minority (and I have no doubt that they are a minority) should mandate who is most appropriate to provide crucial, and potentially life-saving, information to my children and to my patients. I know what my rights are, as a parent, and I don't appreciate others claiming to act in my interest.

Please consider the rights of all Alaskan parents and children in your deliberations. SB 89 should NOT be supported. Thank you again for your service.

Sincerely,

Jennifer McNichol, M.D.

Sitka, Alaska