

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 30, 2023

5:15 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Jamie Allard, Co-Chair
Representative Justin Ruffridge, Co-Chair
Representative Mike Prax
Representative CJ McCormick
Representative Tom McKay
Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Representative Andi Story

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Representative Maxine Dibert
Representative Andrew Gray

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 105

"An Act relating to parental rights in a child's education; relating to access to school records; relating to sex education, human reproduction education, and human sexuality education; relating to school disciplinary and safety programs; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 105

SHORT TITLE: SEX/REPRODUCTION EDUCATION; SCHOOLS

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

03/08/23	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/08/23	(H)	EDC, JUD
03/13/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/13/23	(H)	Heard & Held

03/13/23 (H) MINUTE (EDC)
03/29/23 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/29/23 (H) Heard & Held
03/29/23 (H) MINUTE (EDC)
03/30/23 (H) EDC AT 5:15 PM DAVIS 106

WITNESS REGISTER

DAVID BRIGHTON, representing self
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MARK FRAUD, Physical Education Teacher
Seward Elementary School
Seward, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MORGAN LIM
Planned Parenthood
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

LUPITA ALVAREZ, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

NELSON MERRIL, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

EMILY KANE, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

APAYAUQ REITAN, representing self
Kaktovik, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

CHARLENE APOK, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

BRENDA TAYLOR, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 105.

IZZY ROWLAN, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

NOAH WILLIAMS, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

KAY RAVERT, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MEAGAN HINTON, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

AARON BRAKEL, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

RICKY TAGABAN, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

CONOR LANDRUM, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ABIGAIL LEATHERMAN, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

PAT RACE, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

WENDY BYRNES, Teacher

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

KATIE BOTZ, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MARTIN STEPETIN, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

NAOMI HOOD, representing self
Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ONA ECKERSON, representing self
Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MIAH LAGER, representing self
Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

REECE BUTTON, representing self
Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

VICKI TURNER MALONE, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JACOB RANNEY, representing self
Cordova, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

DAN SULLIVAN, representing self
Petersburg, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

EVERETT BENNETT, representing self
Petersburg, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

DANIELLE LOGAN, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MARIAH BENNET, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

APRIL SMITH, representing self
North Pole, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

MISHA DANIELS, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JOHN BERNITZ, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

BOBBY BURGESS, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ERIN WILLAHAN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

RACHELLE GRIFFITTS, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

JAINA WILLAHAN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MELISSA CAPONE, representing self
Fairview, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

EMILY CHAPEL, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JULIE SMYTH, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

BRYAN MULKERN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

LESLEIGH HARTLEY, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ROSE O'HARA-JOLLEY, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

PORTIA ERICKSON, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

CHANDRA POE, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ESTHER JOSEPH, representing self
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT:

LINDSEY BANNING, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ANDREW WEST, representing self
Bethel, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

RANDY HUGHEY, representing self
Sitka, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105

RAYMOND LEE, representing self
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

NORA GECAN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

DAN POULSON, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MICHAEL GARVEY
American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MONICA WHITMAN, representing self
Eagle River, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MARY ELIZABETH KEHRHAHN-STARK, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

QUINN LINDEMANN, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MICHELLE SINNOTT, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

PATTY BROWN, representing self
Haines, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ALYSSA QUINTYNE, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

KIM HAYS, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

LIZ DEAN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

PAMELA SAMASH, representing self
Nenana, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

BROOKS BANKER, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

COLBY PEREZ, representing self
Kodiak, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

LILLITH CORT, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

KC CASORT, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JAMIE GIBSON, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

DIDI PETERS, representing self
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

AMBER O'BRIEN, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JAMES SELVOG, representing self
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

BENJAMIN PRESTON, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

CHANDLER O'CONNELL, representing self
Sikta, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

NOLA LAMKEN, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

LILLIAN PARTEE, representing self
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MELODY MCCULLOUGH, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

ROSE TITUS, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MIKE COONS, President
Concerned Conservatives of Alaska
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

ZACHARY MACINTYRE, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

NATASHA FALKE, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

KEARSTYN COTTON, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JAY MCDONALD, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

JOSHUA SMITH, representing self

Chugiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JESSICA VAUDREUIL, representing self

Buckland, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

KENDRA ARCINIEGA, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

LIV SWONGER, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

RAVEN AMOS, representing self

Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

BONNY MCWETHY, representing self

Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

COLLEEN DAHLQUIST, representing self

Sitka, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

HOLLY WILLIAMS, representing self

Salmon Bay, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

DAVID MORENO, representing self

Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

BROOK BEVERIDGE, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

KY MARTIN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

VERONICA BUNESS, representing self
Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JACQUELINE DEBEVEC, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

MICHAEL PATTERSON
Party for Socialism and Liberation
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JANET JOHNSON, representing self
Homer, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

HERMAN MORGAN, representing self
Aniak, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

MARGARET SHALIT, representing self
Soldotna, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

FELIX MYERS, representing self
Sitka, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

WILLOW ALISIAE, representing self
No address provided
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

RON JOHNSON, representing self
Butte, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

BERT HOUGHTALING, representing self
Big Lake, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105

MADISON HECKART, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

JERA STEPHENS, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

TEAL HEIDENREITER
Fairbanks Wellness Coalition
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

HANNAH HILL, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

CASEY MCMILLAN, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

AMY AINSLIE, representing self
Sitka, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

CLARICE JOHNSON, representing self
Sitka, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

BUTCH MOORE, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

CINDY MOORE, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

SAMI GRAHAM, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

KAREN JENSEN, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

AUDREY JIRAK, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

LEON JAIMES, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ELEILIA PRESTON, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 105.

SHERRY COBURN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 105.

KC ELLIOT, representing self
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 105.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[5:15:11 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR JAMIE ALLARD called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. Representatives Himschoot, Story, McKay, McCormick, Ruffridge, and Allard were present at the call to order. Representative Prax arrived as the meeting was in progress. Also present were Representatives Dibert and Gray.

HB 105-SEX/REPRODUCTION EDUCATION; SCHOOLS

[5:15:52 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 105, "An Act relating to parental rights in a child's education; relating to access to school records; relating to sex education, human reproduction education, and human sexuality education; relating to school disciplinary and safety programs; and providing for an effective date."

[5:16:35 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD opened public testimony on HB 105.

[5:17:04 PM](#)

DAVID BRIGHTON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He said he is a teacher at Skyview Middle School and expressed his concern about the implications behind the bill. His goal, he said, is to work with special education students so they would reach their full potential; however, there are many things kids bring to the classroom that some students are not prepared to learn, and he opined that the bill would interrupt the learning process for many students in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus (LGBTQ+) community. He said that students must feel safe, and he explained he had students who asked him to use specific pronouns, and when he does that for them, "their faces light up" and they have expressed they are comfortable around him. He asked the committee to respect the rights of the communities of people who are "just looking for common decency," and he stated he thought the bill violated the rights of expression.

[5:19:35 PM](#)

MARK FRAUD, Physical Education Teacher, Seward Elementary School, spoke in opposition to HB 105. His job as an educator is to teach students and keep them safe, with his motto being "come as you are," he said. He expressed his belief that with the high suicide rate the LGBTQ+ communities faced, he found the bill targeted these students and is an overreach. The bill, he said, is a distraction from the overwhelming issues that face students in school, and he urged the committee to focus on the impacts of flat funding and supporting students.

[5:21:08 PM](#)

MORGAN LIM, Planned Parenthood, said he spoke on behalf of Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates Alaska in opposition to HB 105. He opined the bill is an attack on LGBTQ+ youth and it forcibly outs them. All students deserve to have school be their safe space to learn, grow, and develop, and HB 105 forces educators and counselors' hands by requiring them to disclose student health records to parents and get parental permission before respecting a student's gender identity, he said. He offered his belief that LGBTQ+ [students] should have the right to have their pronouns respected and should be able to share their identity in their own time. He added that teachers should not be forced to betray the trust they work so hard to build. He pointed out areas in the bill he opined were violations of privacy and stated that the bill was also an attack on a

student's ability to access basic comprehensive sex education. He urged the committee to oppose HB 105.

[5:24:14 PM](#)

LUPITA ALVAREZ, representing self, stated that she was a teacher in Juneau and had worked with children over 25 years. She said the bill is not a good idea, and it puts a lot of pressure and fear on teachers trying to support students. She asked the committee not to approve the bill.

[5:25:10 PM](#)

NELSON MERRIL, representing self, said he opposed HB 105, and he opined the trans community was in perpetual fear of policies and hateful ideology like "what the bill represents." He added that supporting trans people and their transitions reduces suicide and depression rates which, he said, are astronomical in this demographic. He expressed his surprise at the bill even being heard "out of respect for the governor" at the expense of some of the state's most vulnerable, he said.

[5:26:56 PM](#)

EMILY KANE, representing self, expressed her concern that HB 105 reduces safe spaces for children. She pointed out biology versus society with brief examples, and attempted to give a backdrop to clear up, she expressed, any confusion. She said there is an idea that there can only be two genders, but human expression is much more varied, and making it wrong and illegal for people to express themselves should not be added to everything else. She opined that "this is a mean bill" and urged members to "make it go away."

[5:29:56 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 5:30 p.m.

[5:30:20 PM](#)

APAYAUQ REITAN, representing self, said she was a 25-year-old trans woman and noted that she became the first trans woman to run the Iditarod. She provided her personal background and expressed her worry about "bills like this" and whether she could build a future in Alaska.

[5:33:10 PM](#)

CHARLENE APOK, representing self, provided a brief personal and professional background, and she said that as a parent, she must stand up for efforts that are targeting to harm LGBTQ+ and two-spirit youth. She said that these youths deserve to have safe access to resources, especially through schools, and having a supportive adult in their lives increases well-being. Banning sex education below the fourth grade is incredibly harmful and can cause harm in communities, she opined. On the issue of bathrooms, she offered her opinion that it was a misconception of unsafety, and in addition, the bill would violate the privacy of students. People who self-identify should be supported, she said.

[5:36:22 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 5:36 p.m.

[5:37:03 PM](#)

BRENDA TAYLOR, representing self, expressed specific concerns about provisions in HB 105, additionally, she expressed her confusion why an opt-out option would be replaced with an opt-in option. She added that many times, permission slips get lost in kids' backpacks and it would be detrimental to have the sexual abuse or reproduction classes missed due to parents not understanding they had to opt-in; however, she confirmed her support for family involvement. The more teachers can be helped to be great listeners and facilitators of difficult conversations that encourage students to think for themselves is what school should be, she opined.

[5:39:56 PM](#)

IZZY ROWLAN, representing self, stated they are a trans non-binary individual who works with runaway and homeless youth in Juneau. Their fear is that the bill would put trans children in direct risk, in harm's way, and "actively kill" the youths of Alaska. They stated children do not always have safe homes to go to and if children are forcibly outed, the home would be even more unsafe. They implored the committee to take this seriously, and when kids die, they said they would hold the committee responsible.

[5:41:45 PM](#)

NOAH WILLIAMS, representing self, provided a brief background, and added that he worked with the Juneau Teen Council. He expressed his belief that the bill was "the worst of the garbage" he had seen over the last eight years since coming to committee hearings when the governor originally proposed three separate bills that had similar themes to HB 105. He said the bill is incredibly harmful to Alaska's youth, and a representation of systemic bullying of the most vulnerable people in the state.

[5:43:38 PM](#)

KAY RAVERT, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105 and said she had many concerns regarding the danger the bill would put on the state's youth. The proposed restrictions on sex education can prevent a child from learning how to verbalize sexual abuse, she said. She added that the parental right to keep children from participating in sex education could be used by an abusive parent, therefore harming the child. The restriction on education on sexual orientation and gender identity could cause some to feel left alone, different, and unsafe. The requirement for schools to notify a caregiver of name and pronoun changes violates a child's privacy and could cause harm, she said. She opined that overall, [the bill] is an attack on queer youth and an attempt to keep survivors of sexual abuse silent.

[5:45:49 PM](#)

MEAGAN HINTON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105 and stated she was a teacher for 16 years. She said that parents can opt out of sexual education and at the school it is not an issue, but [the state] is making it an issue. Kids have enough to figure out on their own, she said, and they do not need other people telling them what they are doing is wrong when it comes to expressing who they are as individuals, as it steps on their First Amendment rights.

[5:47:15 PM](#)

AARON BRAKEL, representing self, shared that he had been sexually abused as a child by an unsafe adult and having the tools to speak of it did not come until many years later. All children should have the availability of information and the ability to speak safely about sexual abuse and their own gender, he said, and safety does not always extend to their own

families; therefore, schools and societies need to protect children from their families at times.

[5:49:50 PM](#)

RICKY TAGABAN, representing self, offered a personal background about unacceptance he experienced as a youth, and that educators provided him with a "lifeline" and made him feel accepted. He said the bill would criminalize youths who are in the same situation.

[5:51:24 PM](#)

CONOR LANDRUM, representing self, stated that the first reason he is in opposition to HB 105 was because a school would need parental permission to address students by their pronoun or chosen name. He said it created a policy where the default position of the school is to agree with transphobic guardians of transgender children and increase the reach of their abuse. He expressed further opposition to the bill regarding locker rooms and bathrooms according to biological sex, and he opined everyone should use whatever space makes sense for their gender. He said the bill encourages a transphobic baseline for communities and urged the committee not to pass it.

[5:52:56 PM](#)

ABIGAIL LEATHERMAN, representing self, stated that the bill is "thinly veiled transphobia" that puts the lives and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth at risk. Not acknowledging pronouns and outing kids before they are ready forces non-conforming kids into disempowering and dangerous conditions, she said. Comprehensive and age-appropriate sex education is critical in helping kids identify and protect themselves from sexual abuse, and she opined HB 105 is in direct violation of basic rights.

[5:54:48 PM](#)

PAT RACE, representing self, said that as a member of the public, he thanked the committee for being attentive during the hearing on HB 105. He said being a small business owner, he had trans employees, served on volunteer boards with trans citizens, and he observed that they are like any other member of the community. He stated he is against the opt-in parental permissions which he opined creates mounds of paperwork for teachers. He offered his opinion that the bill is not well-written, invites lawsuits, and takes away from the focus on the

classroom. He stated his belief that Alaska is a live and let live state, and that is not the spirit of the bill.

[5:57:04 PM](#)

WENDY BYRNES, Teacher, offered her background as a teacher and that she came from a long line of teachers. She said that her job was to educate and build strong relationships with students, and to take on this duty she must be ready to accept students for who they are. She added that students must feel they are with trusted adults. She stated that teachers are already tired, and [the requirements proposed under HB 105] would result in another huge issue that they should not have to face. She relayed that as an educator, she celebrated and welcomed diversity in her classroom.

[5:59:53 PM](#)

KATIE BOTZ, representing self, stated she is reverently opposed to HB 105. As a state, she said, Alaska is one of the highest in sexual assaults in the nation. She said that as an advocate on behalf of victims of sexual assault, the bill was a "slap in the face." She opined that the bill would silence students from advocating for themselves if they were abused. School should be a safe haven for children, she said, and students must be allowed to express themselves. She asked the committee to say no to HB 105.

[6:02:52 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 6:02 p.m.

[6:02:57 PM](#)

MARTIN STEPETIN, representing self, said HB 105 is a very unkind bill and not well-written. He added that he was on a school board in Juneau, and opined every school board supports local control, and he offered a description about the meaning of local control. He opined that the bill violates local control in every way of the idea of local control.

[6:06:26 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD invited two young girls to the witness table to testify together.

ONA ECKERSON and NAOMI HOOD, representing selves, introduced themselves.

MS. ECKERSON said, "We are students here."

MS. HOOD added, "Yeah, and we think this bill is very wrong. And we have a friend who is non-binary..."

MS. ECKERSON interwove, "...and they deserve privacy just like everyone else."

MS. HOOD [nodded] and affirmed, "Yeah."

MS. ECKERSON added, "This bill should not be passed."

MS. HOOD [shook her head in agreement].

MS. ECKERSON, at the prompting of Co-Chair Allard that the girls still had time left, stated, "I just think it's really wrong because everyone should have their own right of who they are. It doesn't matter what private part they have; it's who they are from the heart."

MS. HOOD [nodded her head] and said, "Yeah."

MS. ECKERSON continued, "And that's just who they are and they should be supported from who they are."

MS. HOOD stated, "And everybody deserves their right pronouns to be heard, and they deserve to be recognized."

MS. ECKERSON reiterated, "And they should be supported for who they are."

MS. HOOD [nodded] and said, "Yeah."

[6:08:15 PM](#)

MIAH LAGER, representing self, spoke of growing up in Juneau and experiencing its transformation throughout her time. She expressed her belief that Juneau is an accepting place and "going back" in any direction is detrimental. Supporting Juneau children and providing a safe space is something the children are owed, and they have a legal right to a protected space. She asked the committee to not let HB 105 go any further.

[6:09:39 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 6:09 p.m. to 6:13 p.m.

6:13:45 PM

REECE BUTTON, representing self, offered examples of her experience taking a health and sexuality class and that out of her class, only one person opted out. She said HB 105 would require students to be opted-in to this lesson and that many busy parents may say it's "another ridiculous piece of paper" they had to sign. She noted there are many youths effected by their identity, and she questioned how many more hoops they would have to jump through when it's hard enough for them to find a safe space. She said since she is a student, the bill would affect her as well as her peers. She asked the committee to think of the students and reject HB 105.

6:16:19 PM

VICKI TURNER MALONE, representing self, provided her background and spoke in opposition to HB 105. She said while researching the bill, she found pages and pages of parental rights that she opined were over gender issues. She offered her opinion that it is really a "don't say gay" bill and adds another layer of teacher training, fear, and stress, and she noted the current critically short supply of teachers who are already overworked. She pointed out the bill would require students to be separated by biological sex and said she questioned why, as she stated she had not heard any cases of girls being traumatized by transgender girls in the bathroom; however, she related she had heard of a transgender girl being "beat up" in a bathroom. She offered her belief that the state should be more concerned with the overall safety of girls in the school system instead of "throwing a few transgender kids under the bus."

6:19:09 PM

JACOB RANNEY, representing self, stated he wished to speak on why he thought HB 105 is a direct threat to the LGBTQ+ youth in Alaska. He addressed Section 1 (a) (7) in the bill, which read: "requiring written permission from a parent before the name or pronoun used by a public school to address or refer to the parent's child in person, on school identification, or in school records is changed;". He opined this could put students directly in harm's way, and that gender affirmation is suicide prevention. He offered examples of studies and suicide statistics. He pointed out Section 6 (a) (10), which read:

"procedures to address the physical safety and privacy of students in locker rooms and restrooms through the separation of students by biological sex, access to single occupant facilities, or other safety and privacy protocols consistent with AS 14.18.040." He opined that the fact it is presented under the guise of safety is a complete falsehood. He offered quotes from studies that addressed transgender citizens using public facilities which relayed there were no increases in safety risks. He stated his belief was that there was nothing safe in the bill, and it would increase risks towards queer students.

[6:21:26 PM](#)

DAN SULLIVAN, representing self, offered his belief that the law had many flaws and he said it is a solution looking for a problem. He said many of the stipulations are redundant and duplicate what is already in practice. He added that he thought implementation of the law would create unnecessary paperwork and permission [slips], create a hostile environment between the school system, teachers, and parents, and break down the trust between students and teachers, he said. He opined that HB 105 would create an environment of fear and distrust where learning and healthy human development cannot occur.

[6:23:48 PM](#)

EVERETT BENNETT, representing self, observed that when new bills are passed, she had witnessed that it creates more work and less focus on education. She added that schools are overworked, underfunded, and logistically the bill does not make sense, she said.

[6:24:22 PM](#)

DANIELLE LOGAN, representing self, said the human reproduction system is natural and essential for students to learn, and if it weren't for the education she received, she would not have learned about the changes her body went through because her parents never taught her. She added that her parents were not always on top of opting-in to subjects like this, and now kids would have to bring home permission slips. She offered her opinion that the bill is not good because most parents don't discuss this at home, and it could only hurt children as they grow. She asked the committee to vote no on HB 105.

[6:26:47 PM](#)

MARIAH BENNET, representing self, stated she does not think that any bill should have the right to check to see what biological sex a child is and what bathroom they should be using in a school. She added it is the right of the child to use whatever name they see fit when they are enrolled in school, she said. She said she thought HB 105 would be harmful to the LGBTQ+ community.

[6:27:46 PM](#)

APRIL SMITH, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. She wished to remind the public, after much testimony in opposition to the bill, that the rights that are asked to be protected by the bill are natural rights. Not all parents are abusers, and the bill gives parents the right to have knowledge about their children's mental health that the school has, she said. She added that issues such as these need to be solved at the state level at this point.

[6:30:22 PM](#)

MISHA DANIELS, representing self, said HB 105 pushes a large percentage of the population in a direction that is unsafe and unwelcoming, which is the LGBTQ+ community and their families. She stated that more people are needed in Alaska and for families to stop moving away, but she opined that the bill would likely cause families of LGBTQ+ kids to relocate to safer states.

[6:31:22 PM](#)

JOHN BERNITZ, representing self, stated that he was a public defender and had represented hundreds of trans juveniles. He said when they try to hide their transgender nature it leads to mental health issues, and he urged the committee to not pass HB 105.

[6:32:41 PM](#)

BOBBY BURGESS, representing self, opined that regardless of the bill's intent, the effect would cause harm to students, educators, and school districts. Parental rights are an important concern, but he stated that HB 105 seemed unnecessary as parental rights are already intact in the state. He said his concern is that the bill's focus on gender identity would result in violation of student's rights and safety. He said when

members of the LGBTQ+ community are outed to guardians or parents, they are at increased risk of abuse or homelessness, and educators should not be put in a position of being fired or sued.

[6:35:34 PM](#)

ERIN WILLAHAN, representing self, offered her opinion that the bill is a thinly veiled attempt to shame trans and queer people and is a violation of their rights. It is imperative, she said, for schools to be a welcoming place for everyone, and improving sex education for youth is critical. Children should be allowed the safety of exploring themselves and the world with the guidance that a teacher, curriculum, and supportive environment can offer, she said. She reiterated her strong opposition to HB 105.

[6:37:47 PM](#)

RACHELLE GRIFFITTS, representing self, said she supported the governor's bill, HB 105, to ensure parents' rights are respected for their children's educational needs. She brought up an example of her child being given a book assignment and that her child brought its "disturbing contents" to her, and that she as a parent was not informed of the graphic nature of the book to decide if the content was appropriate for her child. She said the book content disrupted her child's learning. She restated her support for HB 105 so parents like her could be notified of graphic sexual content before it is taught and may opt out of the assignment before it is underway, she said. She asked the committee to vote yes on HB 105 so parents can be informed prior.

[6:40:33 PM](#)

JAINA WILLAHAN, representing self, offered her opinion that the language of the bill shows its true intentions have nothing to do with children's safety or the child parent relationship, and everything to do with targeting and marginalizing LGBTQ+ and nonbinary youth. She said for many, school is the only safe space they can rely on. She asked that the state protect kids by allowing them the opportunity to come out to their parents on their own terms. She opined that passing the bill could lead to a large increase in self-harm and suicide among queer youth who feel unsupported. In addition, she said, the bill puts an overwhelming weight on teachers who are already experiencing

increased stress and the possibility of losing their jobs. She strongly urged the committee to oppose HB 105.

[6:42:58 PM](#)

MELISSA CAPONE, representing self, said that students should feel safe in their school environments and the bill attacks the basic rights of some of the most vulnerable students in the community. She opined the bill could cause damage that these students would have to process on their own. It is a goal for students to graduate and find jobs in the community, she said, and in the corporate world companies are moving toward gender neutral restrooms and using chosen pronouns. Making kids feel unsafe to be who they are is a horror that should never be put on a child, and educators are there to help children feel safe and accepted, she said. She strongly urged the committee not to support HB 105.

[6:45:28 PM](#)

EMILY CHAPEL, representing self, said she vehemently opposed HB 105 and that LGBTQ+ people exist, are complete human beings, and are constituents. These citizens are deserving of the same privacy rights as others in the state, she said, and the bill brings up privacy and safety concerns to her. She expressed her frustration based on her understanding that the proposed discriminatory changes [in HB 105] were tied to teachers' bonuses, and she opined that teachers deserve all the money, but not at the cost of their freedom. She asked committee members to "trash the bill" and thanked them for their time.

[6:49:20 PM](#)

JULIE SMYTH, representing self, offered an explanation of various names she uses that are not on her birth certificate but would have required parental permission for her to use. She wished for schools to be accessible for everyone even if their expressions are different from each other's. She urged the committee to vote against HB 105.

[6:51:14 PM](#)

BRYAN MULKERN, representing self, urged the committee to vote no on HB 105 due to its potentially devastating economic impact on Alaska's schools, he said. Parents can have the right to sue the school for violations of not using the child's name on record, and he provided examples. Given the state of the

economy, he pointed out, it is a real and perverse incentive that could tempt any family struggling to pay rent or those wanting to get rich quick at the expense of Alaska's taxpayers. The intent of HB 105, he opined, is to deny transgender students the right to be called by the names they prefer, and it would enable frivolous litigation against the education system.

[6:53:44 PM](#)

LESLEIGH HARTLEY, representing self, provided a personal example of discomfort in telling her parents about how she wanted to express herself. Further, she expressed her concern over the possible creation of a horrible dichotomy between teachers, students, and parents. She expressed her belief that schools do not need to be dealing with lawsuits, but they should be funded and provide proper education to kids. If parents have school records, it could damage mental health, she said.

[6:56:21 PM](#)

ROSE O'HARA-JOLLEY, representing self, said the bill was an attack on LGBTQ+ youth, and they deserve equality and safety in school. She opined that the legislature continues to fail to enact proactive protection and that HB 105 contained potentially unconstitutional and dangerous provisions. Every child should have a safe and supportive family but that is not always the case, and having a safe and trusted adult saves lives, she said. She urged the committee to oppose HB 105.

[6:58:34 PM](#)

PORTIA ERICKSON, representing self, testified in support of HB 105 and thanked the governor for introducing what she opined is a crucial bill. She stated she has had a child in school since 2019, and that the past couple of years there have been difficulties staying up to date with schools' rules, regulations, and lack of transparency. She expressed her belief that the bill firmly defines parental authority and provides more transparency for parents, children, teachers, and school administrators. The bill would ensure privacy for both students and parents, she said.

[6:59:41 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 6:59 p.m. to 7:19 p.m.

[7:19:53 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD briefly discussed public testimony protocol and said she looked forward to hearing more testimony. She further explained that if a call is dropped, testifiers may e-mail their testimony.

[7:21:13 PM](#)

CHANDRA POE, representing self, said she had school-aged children and that she found all the provisions and proposed changes in the bill to be alarming. She said she already had the right to opt her kids out, and the other aspects of the bill felt like a personal attack on, for example, her transgender child. She said transgender kids are not a risk but are at risk. She opined that the passage of HB 105 directly harms her family and many other families. She urged the committee to not go along with the bill.

[7:23:21 PM](#)

ESTHER JOSEPH, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She stated she is already uncomfortable sharing her true self in school, but the passage of the bill would ensure that she would feel unsafe in any school setting. She said the banning of sex education below fourth grade is redundant because sex education about puberty is not generally taught below fourth grade, and it would affect children who need to know how to express themselves were they abused.

[7:25:31 PM](#)

LINDSEY BANNING, representing self, adamantly stated opposition to HB 105. She said the rights of trans kids are being debated and as one of the most targeted groups, they are being marginalized. Despite knowing how high-risk trans kids are, there is still debate on passing a bill that would increase stigma and isolation among trans kids, she opined. She restated her opposition to HB 105.

[7:28:17 PM](#)

ANDREW WEST, representing self, said he strongly supported those who have spoken about the dangers HB 105 holds to LGBTQ+ students. He pointed out the right to sue in the bill, as well as the harm it could bring to the teacher retention crisis. The lawsuit subsection also affects the notification of content section, he said, and he questioned how much power just one

parent would have to prevent all students from accessing materials. He thanked committee members for their time and patience.

[7:30:11 PM](#)

RANDY HUGHEY, representing self, commended people who spoke more eloquently on HB 105 prior to his testimony, and added that it is a "terrible, heartless" idea. He stated that everyone should welcome and accommodate all students of all gender expressions into the schools.

[7:30:57 PM](#)

RAYMOND LEE, representing self, stated that HB 105 targeted the queer demographic; therefore, the bill is their responsibility and not the governor's alone. He said parental rights in the bill are redundant since they have already legally been put in place, and the reality, he opined, is that students' rights to education are the focus as students are the ones who are most affected. Students need support from responsible public services including school resources because sometimes they have nowhere else to turn to, he said.

[7:33:20 PM](#)

NORA GECAN, representing self, opined that Alaska is not a safe place for all queer and trans kids, and some get forcibly outed to their unsupportive families, which would happen more if the bill passed. She added that it could lead to many horrible outcomes. She expressed her belief that HB 105 is not about parental rights but violations of youths' rights. She added that the passage of the bill would have real-life, harmful impacts on queer and trans youth in Alaska, but the presence of and support for these youths in schools does not harm anyone. She related that the state needed to be better than this, and she asked the committee to not pass the bill.

[7:35:41 PM](#)

DAN POULSON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105 and commended prior testifiers. He opined that the bill is a waste of time and will enable frivolous lawsuits against Alaska's schools. He said the proposed legislation had a malicious intent, and students have a right to be called by a name that makes them feel comfortable. At a time when the

education system needs more resources, the bill is a wasteful misuse of taxpayer money, he said.

[7:37:29 PM](#)

MICHAEL GARVEY, American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska, stated that he felt the bill violates the constitutional privacy rights of transgender and nonbinary students and denies them equal access to education. He added that the parental rights provisions would create an untenable situation for educators. He opined it is impossible to separate the practical and legal effects of the bill from the "moment we're in." He said school should be a place where kids do not have to worry about using the restroom, being outed, or being seated in a classroom where their identity is treated as a taboo subject. Schools have a duty to ensure all students can learn in a welcoming and safe environment, he said, and he asked the committee to reject HB 105.

[7:39:38 PM](#)

MONICA WHITMAN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said parental involvement is critical to the success of students and protecting kids' safety, but she opined that is not what the bill is. She offered her belief that the bill does nothing to protect students' safety but would further stigmatize a vulnerable group of children. She said parents already have the choice to opt out of sex education, and schools need to be a safe space where students are taught to work together despite their differences. She urged the committee to vote no on HB 105.

[7:41:56 PM](#)

MARY ELIZABETH KEHRHAHN-STARK, representing self, said she strongly urged the committee not to support HB 105. She observed that the title of the bill in itself refers to parental rights in education, but parents already have their rights in place and have access to the curriculum. She said the bill, as written, violated Alaska's Constitution Article 7, regarding health education and welfare, and Article 1, regarding the right to privacy. She pointed out HB 105 also releases school counseling records to parents without the use of consent, and she urged the committee not to support HB 105.

[7:44:47 PM](#)

QUINN LINDEMANN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He questioned what the parents' rights are in relation to the bill title. He said it is not the first time a phrase similar to this was used to justify what a bill is attempting to represent. If passed, policies in the bill could lead to increased harm and death amongst queer youth through suicide and violence, and the banning of basic education about identity, sex, gender, and basic human rights causes this, he said. He asked the committee to oppose HB 105.

[7:47:02 PM](#)

MICHELLE SINNOTT, representing self, [due to technical difficulties was not able to testify].

[7:47:41 PM](#)

PATTY BROWN, representing self, said that she was a middle school science teacher and offered her belief that the science of the human body systems should begin to be taught before early adolescence. She said sexual assault is far too prevalent in the state and in the nation, and notifying parents about the topic is good, and opting out could happen, but she said that in her experience it rarely did. She opined it is not respectful to children to override their wishes in the regard of gender pronoun use, because identity in early adolescence is a big deal. State law requiring a penalty to punish teachers in schools is far too heavy handed.

[7:50:20 PM](#)

ALYSSA QUINTYNE, representing self, said that one of the duties of a legislative body is protection, and she questioned how the bill would protect students and teachers. She asked what rights are given to parents that they didn't already have under state law and regulations of their respective school district. She stated that the legislative body collectively had failed to protect its marginalized constituents.

[7:52:34 PM](#)

KIM HAYS, representing self, opined that the bill was masqueraded as parental rights but is an attempt to sway attention and distract from the real issues facing Alaska students and teachers. She said schools serve to educate children no matter who they are, and students must feel safe and trust their educators. She added that there are those students

who live in homes where parents do not accept them for who they are, and LGBTQ+ students deserve the same accepting school environment that others benefit from. She offered her belief that legislation like HB 105, among other things, puts educators in a position of endangering their students. Teachers and education support staff are already mandatory reporters for things such as abuse and neglect, she said. She asked the committee to reject HB 105 and refocus energy on adequate funding for education.

[7:55:21 PM](#)

LIZ DEAN, representing self, offered her belief that human rights should be focused on first before emphasizing parental rights, as parents already have rights they can practice as a child's guardian. She offered her belief that the bill would cause harm, and it would compromise and violate the Alaska State Constitution. Additionally, she said she wondered about the establishment of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States - "separation of church and state" - that fundamental ideas are not legitimate ideas to impose on anyone else. She urged the committee to oppose HB 105.

[7:57:45 PM](#)

PAMELA SAMASH, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. She said she supported the bill because schools have no right to hide anything from parents. She added that Christian students were persecuted by the LGBTQ+ [community] in their school. She offered a personal story of her daughter refusing to call a fellow female student by a boy's name, and she was then threatened to be kicked out of her classroom by a public school teacher. She stated she had to fight to keep her daughter in class and won. She said afterwards, her daughter was threatened and harassed by the LGBTQ+ [community] and their friends in the school. She finally homeschooled her daughter, she said. She stated she wished the public school staff had the transparency to know if something like this was happening to their kids, and she said she believed the bill would give parents notification that is important to support their beliefs. She observed what was going on in public schools is against her Christian beliefs.

[8:00:19 PM](#)

BROOKS BANKER, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He provided his background working with the LGBTQ+

community and spoke of his positive experiences. He expressed his concerns that a bill like HB 105 would continue to harm, from teachers who do not support these youths, as well as from information getting to unsupportive parents. [Due to technical difficulties, telephonic connection with Mr. Banker was lost.].

[8:02:42 PM](#)

COLBY PEREZ, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105, stating that it potentially could be harmful to children.

[8:03:49 PM](#)

LILLITH CORT, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. In the guise of advocating for parental rights, the bill would directly impact the safety of students in Alaska, she said.

[8:04:43 PM](#)

KC CASORT, representing self, provided a brief educational background and testified in opposition to HB 105, because all students deserve to feel welcome and safe in school. She added that no student should be forced to come out before they are ready. All young Alaska students deserve access to tools to make the best choices for them, especially what to do if they are assaulted, she said. She opined that bullying had turned into legislation. She reiterated her disappointment with the bill and urged the committee to not pass it.

[8:06:42 PM](#)

JAMIE GIBSON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She stated that she had read HB 105 multiple times and struggled to come up with how to respond to another "blatantly homophobic and transphobic" bill in Alaska. She opined that the bill is detrimental and evil and puts the life of trans and queer children into politicians' hands. She recited contents of the bill and offered her belief that the bill is not Alaskan, or American.

[8:09:25 PM](#)

DIDI PETERS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105 and stated that she was moved by and thanked prior testifiers. She stated that she felt angry about the proposed legislation and urged the committee to vote against it. She

added that, for the sake of tolerance, she wished for the committee to pass HB 99, which would protect LGBTQ+ and two-spirit students.

[8:10:33 PM](#)

AMBER O'BRIEN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She noted she has three school-aged children, she said. She offered her belief that age-appropriate sex education had been proven to reduce instances of sexual abuse in children and gives them the tools to recognize body parts that help them to relay if they are being harmed. She stated that knowledge is power, and that she wanted her kids to go out into the world armed with as much knowledge as possible. She urged the committee to vote no on HB 105.

[8:13:09 PM](#)

JAMES SELVOG, representing self, provided a brief background and said that after reviewing the bill, he thought it was not actually about parents' rights. He opined that the bill would not give parents anything they don't already have. The bill would put a lot of kids at risk, he said, and they could be further harmed by unaccepting families. The bill could strip children of their humanity and their right to privacy, and the language isn't about putting rights into parents' hands as much as it is about reducing children, he said. He opined the bill is unethical and restated his opposition to it.

[8:15:44 PM](#)

BENJAMIN PRESTON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He said LGBTQ+ students are an important part of the community, and the bill is unsupportive. When reading through the bill, he opined that it would open a myriad of possibilities for discrimination, harassment, and harm; however, he expressed his surprise that he saw little about parental rights, which already exist. He asked the committee to support students, parents, and teachers by rejecting the bill.

[8:17:06 PM](#)

CHANDLER O'CONNELL, representing self, said the role of public education is to provide a safe learning environment, and that her right as a parent is tied to that function of the school. She stated she already had many rights as a parent, such as opting out, and she opined HB 105 would take away the rights of

children. She added that the state's job is to protect all students, and every student is potentially harmed by the bill, she said.

[8:19:32 PM](#)

NOLA LAMKEN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said not all families are safe for children, who need to know how to speak and protect themselves. She added that teacher's lives should be made easier, because more teachers and smaller classrooms are needed, she said. She opined that the bill would set students up to be bullied, and people's health, education, and welfare should be supported.

[8:21:42 PM](#)

LILLIAN PARTEE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said statistically speaking, a large percentage of trans youth are suicidal, and bills like this make trans people suicidal, she opined. If the bill were to pass, she said, she would email or call every legislator who let it pass. She encouraged the committee to vote against HB 105.

[8:23:44 PM](#)

MELODY MCCULLOUGH, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. She said it was a sad occasion to have the governor make a bill to keep parents' rights intact because their rights have been removed by the school districts in the state. Not all parents are bad and abusive, she said. She said kids are confused going from elementary into middle school with socialization, emotional behavior, and puberty, and she questioned how they could understand "where they are at" with everything going on. She reiterated her full support for HB 105, and she noted that the Alaska education system has undermined their trust with parents, and accountability must be brought back to education. She related she did not have any issues with transgender people but did not want her child indoctrinated and confused by "all this stuff that is being put into the schools."

[8:26:32 PM](#)

ROSE TITUS, representing self, stated that HB 105 directly affects her as guardian of her sister who is a gender non-conforming youth who would be impacted if she wished to use a bathroom assigned to her gender, she said. She said the bill is

"ridiculous" and it puts more on teachers than they already need. She added that teachers are overburdened, underpaid, and do not need more on their shoulders. She said she read the bill, and opined it pushed trans-genocide.

[8:28:54 PM](#)

MIKE COONS, President, Concerned Conservatives of Alaska, testified in support of HB 105. He reminded the committee that he sent in a more detailed testimony. He stressed that Alaska had the strongest privacy constitution in the nation, and he mentioned Article 1, Section 22, which he said was clear and concise. He said withholding information from parents out of privacy concerns does not apply. Regarding Section 4 of the bill, which addresses reporting, he offered examples of teachers with a bias. He added that he was not sure how that could be addressed in law, through legislation or in regulations.

[8:32:09 PM](#)

ZACHARY MACINTYRE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He opined HB 105 is a dangerous bill which echoes a personal mistake he made in high school, and he briefly shared his story. He pleaded with the committee to vote no on HB 105, as parents already have rights, but they also have responsibilities that include creating a safe environment for their children.

[8:34:31 PM](#)

NATASHA FALKE, representing self, opined that HB 105 is an attack on the LGBTQ+ youth and would increase bullying. She said the bill was detrimental to the safety of students, and it would allow parents to access health information that could be detrimental to the child's safety. She added that the bill could forcibly out LGTBQ+ students to their parents and targets transgender students by forcing them to use the bathroom or locker room that doesn't match their identity.

[8:36:58 PM](#)

KEARSTYN COTTON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105, as she opined it would put transgender students in danger. She stated that some parents do not understand what transgender is, and the affect it could have on a student who is not being accepted in school. Putting students in bathrooms and locker rooms of their assigned sex would put them at risk, and

she expressed her concern over a possible rise in suicide rates of transgender youths. She pleaded with the committee to oppose HB 105.

[8:39:25 PM](#)

JAY MCDONALD, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. He stated that the rights of parents to raise their children according to their own beliefs and values must be defended. Any attempt to strip this away is an affront to American principles of freedom and self-determination, he said, and HB 105 is needed because some administrators and staff operated under an ideological basis. He stated he would reject any attempt to create a society where the state has ultimate authority over parents and children. He said schools should remain places of learning and discovery, not indoctrination of secrets. He urged the committee to vote yes on HB 105.

[8:41:30 PM](#)

JOSHUA SMITH, representing self, said that schools should create a safe learning environment for all students, and he opined that the bill would create barriers to the school environment by stifling opportunities for LGBTQ+ youths. Parents should be engaged in their child's education, but parental rights should not come at the expense of the safety of children, he said. He noted that the bill could violate the constitutional protection of privacy afforded to every Alaskan, and he said that written permission can also forcibly out students before they are ready, which can be devastating for a young queer person. He implored the committee to vote no on HB 105.

[8:43:50 PM](#)

JESSICA VAUDREUIL, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. She stated that parental autonomy is amazing in education, and more parents need to know about their choices. She opined that the bill is a step in the right direction. She expressed her concern that in Section 4, "unless" could undermine the bill, but she is otherwise happy about the bill and restated she supported it 100 percent. She added that there are clubs in school that should be transparent so that parents would know if the child was attending one of them or participating in a certain activity.

[8:46:23 PM](#)

KENDRA ARCINIEGA, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She explained that in high school, she was outed by a teacher before she was ready and suffered bullying, discrimination, and fear. She added that when her parents found out, it was traumatizing, and it impacted her entire experience as a student. She said outing the most at-risk kids for any reason puts them in harm's way, and youths have rights, too. She expressed her belief that the government should not be able to destroy someone's freedom and privacy because you want to "mandate away their identity." She said HB 105 is un-Alaskan, and kids deserve better.

[8:48:39 PM](#)

LIV SWONGER, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said the bill was packaged in the name of parental rights but comes at the expense of students, and it can be catastrophic for those who do not identify [as a] gender and are not in supportive households. She expressed her belief that the proposed legislation would compromise schools being a safe place for students and would put unnecessary stress on teachers in being supportive of students. She urged the committee to keep Alaska's schools safe and free of discrimination.

[8:50:24 PM](#)

RAVEN AMOS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105 and said she hoped the committee would take all the testimony into consideration. She said rights are already in place, and the bill does not do anything to help those rights. She opined what is not being addressed is the fact that the bill would be damaging to the LGBTQ+ community. By supporting the bill, she said, the legislature would do a lot of damage.

[8:52:43 PM](#)

BONNY MCWETHY, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said the bill targets transgender and non-binary people and distracts from real issues. The lives and safety of Alaska's children are at stake, she said, and she asked the committee to quash the bill.

[8:55:51 PM](#)

COLLEEN DAHLQUIST, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said that Alaska's motto is "north to the future," but overreaching legislation is not forward thinking. Targeting

youth members who are different is dangerous and detrimental to their well-being and their families, she said, and she strongly requested that the committee vote against HB 105. She opined that the bill was part of a Christian nationalist agenda and nothing to do with parental rights - but everything to do with marginalizing human beings. She said studies have shown that denying sex education results in higher teen pregnancy rates, and she commended prior testifiers.

[8:58:33 PM](#)

HOLLY WILLIAMS, representing self, said she opposed HB 105 for many reasons. She said she supported parental involvement and transparency in education but having to sign permission slips for reproductive health education created unnecessary barriers for students to receive a needed part of their education. Requiring students to opt in rather than giving them the option to opt out, which they already have, makes it more difficult for at-risk students to receive this protection, she said. She added that the at-risk students are still required to attend school and should feel safe and comfortable there.

[9:00:28 PM](#)

DAVID MORENO, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He brought up Section 1 of the bill, and stated he believed children should have autonomy of what their education holds. In reference to gender neutral bathrooms, he said anything else is a ridiculous idea, and all public spaces should have them. As for sexual education, it is up to the student, not the parent, he said.

[9:02:08 PM](#)

BROOK BEVERIDGE, representing self, said she strongly opposed HB 105 because it targets one of the most vulnerable populations in the community, LTGBQ+. She opined that the bill would allow for too much potential for traumatizing and confusing invasion of children's privacy in body autonomy. Parents and guardians would be allowed to access counseling records without their consent, and she expressed concern if that child was abused at home. Sex education is vital for children to understand what may be happening to them, she said. She asked the committee to protect LGTBQ+ youths and oppose HB 105.

[9:04:29 PM](#)

KY MARTIN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He opined that everyone had wonderful points and he did not want to go over them again, but offered a personal story of his struggles in school due to lack of opportunities that were not available then, like they are now. He said he hoped the committee would be influenced by all the testimony given on HB 105.

[9:06:12 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 9:06 p.m. to 9:11 p.m.

[9:11:08 PM](#)

VERONICA BUNESS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She opined that the bill would kill transgender youth, because forcing kids to be outed or to be misgendered would guarantee a rise in suicide. She added that the bill would harm those whose privacy is invaded in determining using the correct bathroom. She stated her opposition against legislation that would be against comprehensive age-appropriate sex education or a child's right to freely express themselves. School is where kids learn who they want to be, and she said it must happen at their own pace. She offered her belief that the bill would not help children, but fully funding schools would.

[9:13:16 PM](#)

JACQUELINE DEBEVEC, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She offered a personal example of an experience that focused on acceptance, that she said changed her life. She said all people deserve to be treated with love, respect, and dignity, as they are all sacred beings, and everyone should feel safe at school. She added that teachers, counselors, and administrators should not be sued for keeping children safe or choosing not to disclose what is said in confidence. She encouraged the committee to respect all students and vote against HB 105 but asked them to support HB 99.

[9:15:32 PM](#)

MICHAEL PATTERSON, Party for Socialism and Liberation, testified on behalf of himself and the Party for Socialism and Liberation in adamant opposition of HB 105. The bill lacks merits, and not teaching children comprehensive sex education puts children in danger, he opined. He said the section that is a "bathroom bill" would marginalize people, and he asked the committee to

"really think about this." On gender pronouns, he offered his belief it was not the government's business and is authoritarian. The idea that parents could sue the school is an underhanded way to de-fund schools and undermines the integrity of the Alaska Court System, he said.

[9:18:17 PM](#)

JANET JOHNSON, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. She said she had one concern in the bill about parents being notified about sex education classes, and that the bill should go further in notifying parents of all topics that are going to be discussed, among other additions. She restated her support for the bill but expressed her belief that the bill needs to go further.

[9:19:26 PM](#)

HERMAN MORGAN, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. He expressed his disappointment to hear "what they're doing" and concern regarding the laws of God, the destruction of morality, and the violation of parental rights. He said kids are being given hormone replacement drugs and abortion pills. He opined there is "genocide out there." He said kids are being sexually abused at school and parents have the right to protect their children. He said he applauded the committee for listening to the governor.

[9:22:26 PM](#)

MARGARET SHALIT, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She stated what causes trauma is when a person is not a willing participant in something; therefore, forcing children in situations they are not consented to because they were seeking support is traumatic for them. She pointed out that the bill mentions separation by biological sex, but there are students who do not have a "box to put them in."

[9:24:42 PM](#)

FELIX MYERS, representing self, offered his belief that although HB 105 states it is a parental rights bill, the changes made in the bill are targeted as suppressing education support and safe environments at schools by specifically targeting queer students. He said the state must not throw fellow Alaskans back into the dark place of ignorance, and he stated that he hoped empathy would guide the committee's vote.

[9:27:22 PM](#)

WILLOW ALISIAE, representing self, informed the committee he is not from Alaska but is moving to the state soon and called to testify in opposition to HB 105. The youth of the state of Alaska are in absolute danger, he opined, and he questioned parental rights in the bill. He added if parents want to know what their children are up to, they should be a safe space for them. He encouraged the House to go by the testimony and vote against HB 105.

[9:30:38 PM](#)

RON JOHNSON, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. He stated he fully understood the language of the bill and that it strengthens parental rights. He expressed how important education is to him, and he referred to Section 5, subsection (e), and said he wished to see it strengthened and for written notification to be more specific. He observed that many testifiers spoke of rights, but not responsibilities. He restated his full support for HB 105 and said he would submit written testimony with his suggestions as well.

[9:32:53 PM](#)

BERT HOUGHTALING, representing self, said he was appalled at how many people think parental rights end as soon as children go into the public education system, and that more needed to be done to strengthen the bill, he opined. He added that parents have the right to know what children are learning in school and parents are responsible for them until they turn 18. He said if there was the kind of abuse going on that was claimed in prior testimony, there are laws in place that should be enforced, and those parents should be punished. He stated his support for HB 105 and that the bill should be strengthened.

[9:35:29 PM](#)

MADISON HECKART, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said the bill would directly threaten herself and her peers' ability to learn safely and comfortably, and she asked the committee to consider students' rights before parents' rights. She stated she was a person who deserved autonomy and a comprehensive and appropriate education about sex and gender along with all her peers. Alaska's youth should not be put in

harm's way in the name of parental rights, and she opined the bill would actively harm kids and trans youths in the community.

[9:37:54 PM](#)

JERA STEPHENS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said it targeted the LGBTQ+ community in the name of parental rights, and she hoped the committee would oppose the bill.

[9:39:15 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 9:39 p.m. to 9:40 p.m.

[9:40:56 PM](#)

TEAL HEIDENREITER, Fairbanks Wellness Coalition, called on behalf of herself and the Fairbanks Wellness Coalition in opposition to HB 105. She opined that preventing the bill from passing is suicide prevention, and if the bill passed, suicide numbers would increase in LGBTQ+ youths. She implored the committee to let the bill die in committee.

[9:42:51 PM](#)

HANNAH HILL, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105, and she observed that the testimony given speaks to the importance of the matter and the seriousness with which Alaskans are taking this [proposed legislation]. She said Alaska's children need protection such as treating them as whole people and not forcing manufactured fears on them or their bodies. She said some of her queer peers received abusive behavior from non-supportive family members.

[9:45:28 PM](#)

CASEY MCMILLAN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She opined the bill would harm some of the most vulnerable kids under the guise of parental rights, which are already protected. The bill would harm queer kids by outing them to their parents before they are ready, and the bill would harm students and teachers by creating problems where there were none, she said. She urged the committee to protect the rights of all Alaska students and vote against HB 105.

[9:46:37 PM](#)

AMY AINSLIE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105 for several reasons, she said. She opined it is an inappropriate use of state coercion, could force the outing of students, and could create an unsafe environment for students. Possible lawsuits against Alaska's own schools is poor stewardship of the education system. She said comprehensive sex education is critical and too important to risk with forgotten permission slips. The bill would violate the rights of parents to send their children to a safe school environment and it would open the door to further restrictions, she said. She opined there is no justification as to why all these things should be mandated by the state, and she asked the committee to join the vast majority of constituents who have testified in opposition to HB 105.

[9:49:01 PM](#)

CLARICE JOHNSON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She opined the bill is unnecessary and cruel. She said trans and non-binary youth are at a higher risk of suicide especially when they lack support, and school is the only place that some may find acceptance. She noted people are leaving Alaska in record numbers and if the bill passed, it could increase the exodus. As shown by the testimony, the bill does not represent most of Alaska and should not pass, she said.

[9:50:43 PM](#)

BUTCH MOORE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He focused on Section 7 of the bill which would, he said, effectively repeal Bree's Law and Erin's Law. He explained the history of the Bree's Law bill and its success story. He asked that the committee remove Section 7 from HB 105, as Bree's Law and Erin's Law have been critical education not just in Alaska, but nationally.

[9:52:54 PM](#)

CINDY MOORE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She said she opposed Section 7 of the bill, which she opined would repeal Bree's Law and Erin's Law by making it "opt in" versus "opt out" and she expressed her concern about that language. She said she contacted a representative of the governor's administration, and the person, after researching with legal staff, confirmed that Bree's Law and Erin's Law would not be affected in any way. She expressed her concern that is not what the language in HB 105 says. She said changing from an

opt out to an opt in would "gut" [Bree's Law and Erin's Law]. She questioned why anyone would not want their child to learn about healthy relationships or learn how to protect themselves against sexual assault and abuse. She reiterated her confusion and asked the committee to put forth an amendment to remove Section 7. She added that her concern goes beyond Bree's Law and Erin's law, and she stated that she believed in parental rights, but also youth rights.

[9:56:08 PM](#)

SAMI GRAHAM, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. She said the bill, a parental rights bill, had been extremely mislabeled by speakers that came before her. She related that she personally counseled hundreds of families and taught parenting classes, and involving parents in the child's education was always the goal because the number one predictor of a child's success in education is parental involvement, she said. If a teacher suspects that a child is not safe, she pointed out, educators are already mandated to report. She said HB 105 honors parental involvement through requiring basic notification and providing written permission, and she expressed her belief that the bill does not target any child and supports teachers. Additionally, she said HB 105 is a step in the right direction for school performance. She asked the committee to listen to all voices, not just special interest groups who may have mislabeled the bill.

[9:59:13 PM](#)

KAREN JENSEN, representing self, opposed HB 105, and noted the amount of testifiers prior to her who testified against the bill. Parents already have most of the rights as outlined in the bill, and she opined the bill takes away the rights from other parents and children. She noted there are already difficulties getting teachers in the state, and the bill would make it much worse. She questioned what teacher would want to get threatened with a fine for calling a child by their preferred name. Additionally, the bill could make kids distrust their teachers, making their job even harder. Early grade sex education helps kids know when something isn't right and how to get the help they need, she said. She reiterated that she hoped the committee would oppose the bill.

[10:01:48 PM](#)

AUDREY JIRAK, representing self, strongly urged the committee to pass HB 105, as she stated kids are sent to school for the teaching of academics, not sexual identity, sexual education, or the use of what pronouns they feel they most identify with. The bill does not discriminate against LGBTQ+ people, it puts the parents in control of what they want to expose their children to, she said. The choice is in the parents' hands where it should be, not in the hands of the teachers or school; additionally, teachers should not hide anything from parents unless they have their own personal agenda to push from the kids, she opined. She related that trust in the public school system is at an all-time low, as is proven by parents pulling their kids out of public school and finding alternatives. She added that she is not far from considering one of these options. She thanked the governor and the committee for their time.

[10:03:59 PM](#)

LEON JAIMES, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. He said the bill is violence against the LGBTQ+ community and against children, and he noted the overwhelming opposition to the bill. He asked the committee to oppose HB 105.

[10:05:11 PM](#)

ELEILIA PRESTON, representing self, testified in support of HB 105. She said that as a teacher, conversations need to begin with the parents, not the teacher, and children do not belong to the government, but to God. She pointed out the struggles of Alaska's ranking in education and opined that these types of topics take away from getting an education. She restated her support for HB 105.

[10:06:31 PM](#)

SHERRY COBURN, representing self, stated that she read through the bill and did not understand how prior testifiers "read into it" that it harmed children. She said parents have a responsibility to teach their children in a loving environment and she offered her belief that the reason kids are confused and committing suicide is due to them being bombarded with "all this stuff." She questioned why they can't just be called the name given by their parents, and she stated that "we are making this way too complicated." Parents' rights, she said, have been trampled, and kids should be talking about reading, writing, and arithmetic. She related that in elementary school, her kids were not even thinking about sexual education or sexuality so

why, she asked, is this being forced onto kids. She opined that schools must go back to the basics, teach kids what they are sent to school for, and let the parents teach the kids other matters. She concluded with her belief that parents should know what the kids are being taught.

[10:08:56 PM](#)

KC ELLIOT, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 105. She observed that many callers have stated the many problems with the bill, that it harms LGBTQ+ students without giving parents rights that they don't already have. She opined the bill would lead to increased bullying, violence, suicide, and trauma for students. She spoke to the financial issues and economic costs for the state of "this poorly crafted legislation." She added that she believed the bill would cause lawsuits and would put undue burden on teachers and school districts when they are already overworked and underpaid. The bill would add another layer of administration and cost, and HB 105 is just another poor legal choice and a distraction, she said. She urged the committee to drop the bill and move onto something else.

CO-CHAIR ALLARD announced that HB 105 was held over.

[10:12:01 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 10:12 p.m.