

House Health & Insurance
 03/23/2022 01:30 PM
 HB22-1236 Parent's Bill Of Rights
 Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Ingrid Moore Against Self</p>	<p>Please vote NO on this bill.</p> <p>The bill is unnecessary and intrudes on existing relationships schools may have with students’ parents/families. It is a “big government” intrusion into the lives of Colorado families.</p> <p>At best, it is an attempt to solve a problem that does not exist. At worst, it puts “transphobia” into official policy!</p> <p>This bill is a moderated-for-Colorado version of the bills being introduced in other states (FL, TX) to charge parents with child abuse if they follow medical and psychological professional advice to assist their child in transitioning to the gender that they are psychologically identifying with.</p> <p>I have a 20-year-old non-binary grandchild who knew They were different while in middle school. They do not identify as female or male and is trying to find an identity that feels right in both worlds. In our case, this has not involved hormones or surgery, but if it had we would have fully supported Them. The gender dysphoria of our grandchild is on a naturally occurring spectrum of human genetics that is still being studied scientifically.</p> <p>This is not a CHOICE They just decided to make in middle school; it is a cellular-level conviction.</p> <p>The bill puts a burden on the school district, schools, and teachers to “develop and adopt a policy to promote the involvement of parents”. We don’t need a law in order to promote parental involvement.</p> <p>In the case of LGBTQ+ children, such a law could prove harmful! In some cases children are put at risk when their “transphobic” or anti-LGBTQ parents are notified of their situation. If the child has not confided in their parents by then it could be that they don’t feel safe doing so.</p> <p>Secure, confidential counseling to such students and their families could be offered, instead of inserting the State and School District into the lives of Colorado children and families.</p> <p>Please vote NO on this Bill!</p>



AMERICAN ATHEISTS

March 23, 2022

The Honorable Rep. Susan Lontine
Chair, House Health and Insurance Committee
Colorado State Capitol - Room HCR 0112
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80203-1784

Re: OPPOSE HB22 1236 Letter of Opposition from American Atheists to a bill that would undermine education in Colorado public schools

Dear Chairperson Lontine and Members of the House Health and Insurance Committee:

As a Colorado resident and volunteer for American Atheists, which has more than 1,300 constituents in Colorado, I write in opposition to HB22 1236, which would undermine education in Colorado public schools and needlessly endanger our youth. Under the pretext of a concern for “parents’ rights,” the bill creates a host of draconian new restrictions on teachers and school staff. We strongly urge you to reject this harmful bill.

American Atheists is a national civil rights organization that works to achieve religious equality for all Americans by protecting what Thomas Jefferson called the “wall of separation” between government and religion created by the First Amendment. We strive to create an environment where atheism and atheists are accepted as members of our nation’s communities and where casual bigotry against our community is seen as abhorrent and unacceptable. We promote understanding of atheists through education, outreach, and community-building and work to end the stigma associated with being an atheist in America. Religious liberty is an individual right guaranteed by the First Amendment, and American Atheists opposes efforts to misuse these constitutional protections to undermine the civil rights or religious freedom of others.

We all care about our children’s freedom to learn and be themselves, no matter who our parents are, what we look like or where we’re from. A good education in a safe and welcoming environment is foundational to participating in society. Although this bill is framed about protecting parents’ rights, the only rights protected are those of a narrow fringe worried that the school will steal their children’s DNA or biometric data and those paranoid about what clubs

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their children have joined. And in order to protect these absurd “rights,” this bill would sacrifice the health and safety of other students.

HB22 1236 harms LGBTQ students by denying them a place of safety in Colorado schools. It creates a specific parental opt-out for any classes or information about sexuality and requires disclosure of school clubs offered, which can be an important refuge for LGBTQ youth.

Colorado’s public schools are meant to be safe and welcoming for all students. Lawmakers should not manufacture “parent’s rights” that endanger students or undermine their civil rights. I strongly urge you to reject this unnecessary and harmful bill. If you should have any questions regarding American Atheists’ opposition to HB22 1236, please contact Brett Parker, American Atheists State Policy Manager, at bparker@atheists.org.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Kallivrousis
Broomfield, Colorado

HB22-1236 - Oppose
Selina Najar, Cobalt

Good Afternoon, Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Selina Najar and I serve as the political director for the abortion rights organization, Cobalt. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today - I'm speaking in opposition to HB1236. And while Cobalt specifically advocates for access to reproductive health care, our organization opposes this bill for two primary reasons:

- HB1236, should it pass, would have an immediate chilling effect on minors accessing necessary health care including birth control. And;
- With regard to minors accessing an abortion **specifically**, HB1236 is unnecessary because of Colorado's Parental Notification Act which passed in 2003.

At face value, having a minor's parents make their health care decisions on their behalf **sounds** like a good idea. And if all minors had healthy, communicative relationships with their parent or legal guardian, this **would** be a good idea. Unfortunately, when the rubber meets the road - this type of policy can result in critical health care being out of reach by minors.

This bill would create significant barriers for the protection of our most vulnerable children and young people – most importantly those who have been abused by their parents or who cannot approach their parents with their needs. It's important to balance the best interest of the minors with the rights of a parent.

Under the guise of protecting "parents' rights" HB1236 would create a litany of barriers to healthcare for minors that could ultimately result in negative health and life outcomes.

For example: Accessing birth control for at-risk minors would become even more difficult. Currently in Colorado, young people between the ages of 14-17 can receive birth control from a medical professional without the consent of their parent.

What we know from the empirical data resulting from the Colorado Family Planning Initiative which provided free or reduced-cost Long Acting Reversible Contraception to low income young people: having access to affordable contraception substantially reduced the rate of teenage pregnancy in Colorado. Teen pregnancy dropped by about half as a result of the CFPI.

Minors being forced to get a parent or legal guardian's consent prior to getting birth control would almost certainly lead to an uptick in teen pregnancy in Colorado.

Young people deserve to access information, intervention or protections available to them – including information and intervention on their welfare, education, health care and mental health, so they can or be assisted to make informed decisions about their well-being and health.

No need for this bill. Parental Notification is already in statute. This bill would take that a step further - mandating parental consent for a minor to get an abortion.

Thank you for your time. Please vote no on HB1236.