

House Judiciary

04/16/2024 Upon Adjournment

SB24-189 Gender-Related Bias-Motivated Crimes

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Ellen Daehnick Against herself	<p>Thank you to the members of the House Judiciary Committee for allowing my testimony. My name is Ellen Daehnick, I'm a Democrat living in Denver, CO, and I'm representing myself.</p> <p>SB 24-189 removes sexual orientation from the statute covering bias-related crimes and harassment, and replaces it with gender identity. I object to this change in the law.</p> <p>Gays and lesbians have fought for basic rights for many years in Colorado, and in 2008, the legislature passed a bill making it illegal to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in education, public accommodations, employment, and housing. Sexual orientation was defined as "an individual's orientation toward heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or transgender status or another individual's perception thereof." LGBT people celebrated the end of Colorado's reign as the "Hate State".</p> <p>However, SB 24-189 is one of a series of recent bills from Democrats aimed at limiting or removing the rights of gays and lesbians as a protected group in Colorado. In 2021, the House Bill 21-1108 changed the definition of sexual orientation as it applies to anti-discrimination law. The words heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender were all deleted from the legal definition and replaced by ill-defined gender identity in this bill, and by signing it into law, Governor Polis removed some of gays' and lesbians' hard-won rights.</p> <p>This bill, 24-189, continues that assault on the rights of gays and lesbians. By removing the same words from the definition of bias-motivated crimes and harassment, and replacing them with gender identity, this bill further erases gay people's rights.</p>

	<p>The illiberal, authoritarian left behind this series of bills is doing more to undermine protections based on sexual orientation in Colorado than the Christian fundamentalist right could have ever dreamed to achieve. As a Democrat, I will tell you that the calls are truly coming from inside the house.</p> <p>I urge you to vote no on SB 24-189.</p>
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April 2024

To: House Judiciary Committee

Re: SB189- Gender-Related Bias-Motivated Crimes

Dear Committee Members:

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. More than 700 community leaders are members of AAUW branches around Colorado.

One of AAUW's top priorities is to increase the number of women, and the diversity of backgrounds they represent-- including race, ethnicity, age, income, gender, and sexual identity-- in policy and other decision-making positions. While we have made progress over the years, we now face a growing number of bias-motivated crimes involving gender identity and gender expression. Senate Bill 189 adds important new protections that will bring us closer to providing the justice that victims of these offenses deserve.

For these reasons, AAUW of Colorado strongly supports Senate Bill 189 and requests your YES vote in committee and throughout the process of becoming law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a light blue rectangular border.

Su Ryden

AAUW Colorado Public Policy Co-Director

16699 E. Kentucky Ave.

Aurora, CO 80017

303.898.5797

suryden25@gmail.com

American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.