

# House Bill 2238

## Committee on Education

Presenter: Iridescent Riffel, Lawrence KS, Private Citizen, In Opposition to HB 2238

- HB 2238 is bullying.
  - Defined bullying as
    - Any intentional or any intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act or threat by any student, staff member or parents towards a student or by any student, staff member or parents towards a staff member that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that such gesture, act or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, knows or should know will have the effect of:
      - Harming a student or staff member....
    - Every rep should have the bill notes where this is further defined
  - This is repeated behavior of bullying. This is the FOURTH attempt at this bill
  - The effects this will have on K-12 trans kids is monumental
    - Target bullying by adults onto a few trans kids.
    - There is no attack on women's sports but there is an attack on trans kids. Trans athletes are not dominating sports in Kansas- we've asked for evidence of this 3 times before and the evidence hasn't been presented because it is not there. This proposal is and of itself sends the message not only to other adults but to kids that its okay to bully and target trans kids- specifically trans kids who play sports.
    - It creates an environment where trans kids identities are up for debate and leaves trans kids feeling invalidated and targeted.
  - This bill is focusing on targeting a small, marginalized group of people.
    - I didn't come out as a kid because I knew it wasn't safe for me.
    - I've been met with disgust for simply existing
- Trevor Project Study
  - Just the introduction of legislation like this causes mental distress on trans youth. 2/3rds of trans youth state they have had their mental health negatively impacted.
- This is legislative overreach. Why would a committee hold a hearing on bullying and then hear a bill that meets the very definition of bullying.

- I'm an eagle scout and that is very important to me. I was taught to be helpful, friendly, courteous, kind- this bill and all the other anti-trans bills are none of these things. I spent a decade working with scouts down at camp and became an educator.
  - I was shown hate for saying I felt like a girl growing up.
  - I just want to be myself-that's all trans kids want too.
  - These bills push rhetoric that its okay to bully and to target. Life is hard enough for trans youth- we shouldn't be adding to it. Being a kid is a time to explore who you are, to have fun, and to just be yourself. Bc when you grow up that targeting/bullying doesn't stop. I've lived this.
- 14 Anti-trans bills since last January
- These bills aren't about sports. Or about protecting kids. This is trans erasure.
- Trans kids want to cherish, love, flourish, and surround themselves with people who accept love and cherish them too. A team can be this place and trans kids shouldn't have that opportunity ripped away from them. Be a conduit
- Please open your hearts and your minds. Our voices have the power to lift people up or to maim. Will you hold someone's hand in support or will you rip a hole through their heart?