

Jeanne Koontz

Private Citizen

SB 76

Written Only

Opponent

3/4/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity for me to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Jeanne Koontz and I am a voter in Hutchinson. I strongly encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

Our teachers, counselors, and administrators are under enough constraints in the public school system. It is hard to retain good teachers which has led to school closures or consolidating schools. This happened recently in USD 308 where they consolidated two schools because there weren't enough teachers.

This bill makes it more difficult for teachers and counselors to connect with their students and teach them. The teachers now have to worry about using the exact correct name on a birth certificate so they don't get sued. The damages section in this bill is overly broad and paves the way for litigation based on overhearing conversations. This further erodes the trust we give to teachers and will reduce the number of people wanting to pursue a career in public education.

Kids and teachers should be able to build a relationship using nicknames and preferred pronouns so that kids feel comfortable, respected, and valued. It is important for our children to have safe, adult role models outside their families that allow them to be themselves.

Thank you for hearing my thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you to vote NO on SB 76.  
Thank you.

Cindy Kuhlman

Private citizen

SB 76

WRITTEN ONLY

Opponent

3/4/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Cindy Kuhlman and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

As a mother, I fully oppose this bill for the harm it will inflict on trans youth. I have no trans children in my family, but I am horrified by the hurt and damage you are inflicting on these young humans with bills like these. As a family member of teachers, I cannot imagine the burden this will put on our already underpaid and over burdened educators. And as a lawyer, the damages clause in this bill is overbroad, a potentially enormous waste of legal resources, and the actual damage from "hearing the use of gender pronouns" is non-existent. There are many violations of constitutional rights in this bill.

Thank you for considering my thoughts on this bill. I encourage you all to vote no on the passage of SB 76. Thank you.

Maggie Leonard

Private citizen

SB 76

WRITTEN ONLY

OPPONENT

3/3/2025

My name is maggie leonard I am a voter in the United States in fairway Kansas and I encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

Students should feel comfortable in their schools and part of that is treating them how they want to be treated in the most comfortable way

Thank you for your consideration

Susan Leonard

PRIVATE CITIZEN

SB 76

WRITTEN ONLY

OPPONENT

3/2/2025

Dear Chair Estes and Members of the Committee. I appreciate your time and attention to my thoughts about SB 76. My name is Susan Leonard and I am a voter in Johnson County (Fairway). I am writing to do all that I can to discourage you to vote NO on SB 76.

In my 30 years serving in public schools in Kansas I can tell you that students identifying as transgender are rare. As a small minority of students who already feel out of place inside their bodies, they are the subject of mental health challenges, bullying, etc. As a child grows and develops a healthy self identity, it is imperative that we allow for that growth. Regardless of your own personal feelings about transgender people, putting teachers in the middle of this issue is displaced. The teaching profession is hard and thankless. Lately, increasing demonization of these hard working and underpaid people has led to a hiring and retention crisis. Bills like these put teachers in a position of taking a stand rather than just supporting their students. If a student who was born male says, call me "she" -- what difference does this make in the way the teacher proceeds to teach the curriculum? By forcing teachers to pick this fight, you have created a distraction in the learning environment. Additionally, it is natural for students to "try on" different personalities and identities as they figure out who they are -- rather than be afraid and work to make these children further hate themselves, can't we agree that we want to keep children alive? Transgender students suffer in so many ways, please don't pile on to keep their rates of suicide up. Educators need to be able to love the kids in front of them, however they present themselves -- and then get on with teaching!

About 15 years ago, I had my first experience with an openly transgender student. This child was suffering, suicidal and he and his mother and I had no idea where to go. She couldn't leave her home for fear he would harm himself. He read a book (one that has been banned) that exposed him to the possibility that he could be transgender. With the help of therapists, physicians and a mother who was heartbroken and confused, this brave young man taught us so much. It was a nearly immediate turnaround. She became He and adopted a new name. He was happy, he got straight A's, he and his mother got along at home. I remember when we had a sex education course coming up -- one where we would traditionally separate children by gender -- I asked several male students what they thought about this and they were baffled that anyone would even care. Although they had grown up with this student presenting as a female, they saw the transformation and even my most skeptical families admitted to me that it just made sense. No one could argue that this young man was a great kid by any measure -- honestly better than when he was unhappily presenting as female. I have had this experience

over and over again. When a child figures out who they are, and when they are loved for who they are -- all the other worries fall away. When there is resistance, the outcomes are troubled and too often, fatal (I have had that experience, too, and it is excruciating).

I also urge you to ask young people what they think. Much like my generation cannot fathom segregated schools, young people tell me time and time again that this is an issue "old people" make a big deal out of and they are sick and tired of hearing about it. "Why do they care?" is the refrain I hear and I wonder the same thing. If you want to deny your own child his or her identity, there is little I can do. But you cannot ask an educator to join your narrow view and to then treat a child in a way that has been known to cause irreparable harm.

Thank you again for considering my perspective. The transgender issue is complicated, and certainly a challenge for us elders to fully understand. Change can be scary, but in our country, imposing hate on "others" has never led to good outcomes. It is time we turn our focus on helping all Kansans and not on demonizing just a few.

Opposition Written Only Testimony – SB 76  
For the House Education Committee  
March 4, 2025  
Jacqueline Lightcap, Topeka  
Private Citizen and Parent

Rep. Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to voice my opposition to SB 76. This bill is a clear attack on Kansas kids and their schools and a great overreach by the legislature.

While written under the guise of “free speech,” this bill actually restricts students’ speech and freedom of expression, as well as their right to privacy. In addition, the damages portion is broad and will lead to unnecessary lawsuits, not to mention the ill effects on our educators and school administrators. If we want our teachers to focus on educating our students, and I believe we can all agree we do, why would we make it so easy to find fault? If student success is our goal, this bill does nothing to that end.

I have plenty of other excellent talking points for why this bill is not good for Kansans. My driving force for sharing my opposition today, however, is my kids. I’m a parent to a 17-year-old high school student and a 20-year-old college student and when I mentioned this bill to them, they were incredulous. We always taught them to call a person the name they wish to be called, as a sign of respect. Even if we may not understand the reason, their name is their business and their reasons are their own. This bill flies in the face of one of the most traditional midwestern values I know, which is respect for our neighbor.

Out of respect for your elected positions, and your valuable time, I will close. This bill is bad for Kansas, for Kansas students of all ages, and ultimately runs contrary to free speech, the right to privacy, and just common sense Kansas values of respect and care for our neighbor. Please vote no on SB 76.

Jacqueline Lightcap  
Topeka

Cathy Linde

Private citizen

SB 76

Written only

Opponent

3/4/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Cathy Linde and I am a voter in Overland Park, KS. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

This bill is a clear violation of the free speech we have been blessed to have in this country. There have certainly been times when I have not appreciated the scope of what free speech covers- for example, neo-nazi rallies- but I understand that taking away one group's free speech rights puts us all in jeopardy of losing ours. This is a free speech issue for anyone who respects someone's chosen name and pronouns, and slides into authoritarianism giving people the right to sue each other over the use of said pronouns. How preposterous in a "free" country.

I do not accept that this is a free speech issue for the minority of teachers who object to using someone's preferred name and pronouns. This is rather a matter of empathy and respect for differences.

Finally, consider that among your constituents are many transgender folks who are far more likely to attempt or complete suicide if they have to live outwardly incongruently with their felt gender. Is a teacher more likely to attempt or complete suicide if they have to call someone by their preferred name or pronouns? Highly unlikely. Please consider the humanity of this issue.

Thank you again for hearing my thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote NO on the passage of SB 76.

Opposition Testimony for SB 76  
For the House Committee on Education  
February 28, 2025  
Emmaline Lorenzo

Dear Members of the House Committee on Education,

I am writing to you in the strongest opposition of SB 76. I am a member of the Lawrence community, and work as a postdoctoral researcher at KU. I earned my PhD in chemistry at Northwestern University and have taught in various capacities at the post-secondary level for five years, working with hundreds of students. I hope to continue to pursue education as part of my future career. As such, I find SB 76 at best a gross overreach of government power, and at worst a thinly veiled attempt to continue targeting with the hopes of destroying a marginalized group in our community.

While I have primarily worked with post-secondary students, I believe the same courtesies and relationship should be extended to students in the K-12 education system. They deserve to safely express themselves without fear of retribution, bullying, and harassment. This bill is antithesis for creating a productive educational environment. Firstly, it *protects* bullies. It protects students and teachers who would blatantly disrespect the most basic wishes of trans individuals, and furthermore gives them even more unbalanced power by allowing them to pursue legal action if they are “harmed” by a trans individual asking for the basic courtesy and decency of being addressed by their correct name and pronouns.

Furthermore, this bill puts trans students in a highly precarious and possibly dangerous position wherein they must seek their parents’ permission to be properly addressed at school. This forces students out themselves to their parents, and if they are not met with support, this may lead to extremely damaging secondary effects. Moreover, it is a total overreach to demand that every individual be referred to as the name and “correct” pronouns for their given sex at birth. Do students need to start carrying papers around school with them for proof? Who has a right to this personal and private information? Why can’t we simply act with common decency and respect for individuals who are asking for the absolute bare minimum?

Trans individuals are a vital part of a diverse community, and SB 76 will only serve to further harm an already marginalized and targeted demographic, while giving more power to the already powerful. The personal identity and pronouns of another human being has absolutely zero negative impact on the educational environment. Students who are simply asking to be respected and treated like a person should not be met with bullying, harassment, and policing in a place where they are supposed to learn and grow. I am strongly opposed to SB 76, and hope Kansans do not have to come to see it pass.

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmaline Lorenzo



Meg Lyles, LMSW

School Social Worker / Parent

Senate Bill 76 Opposition - Written Testimony Only

House Committee on Education

Email Address: meglyles1@gmail.com

February 27th, 2025

Chair Estes and House Committee on Education Members:

My name is Meg Lyles and I am writing as a public school educator in opposition to Senate Bill 76 (SB 76). I have worked as a school social worker in public education for the last 24 years. I am also a mother of three boys, all of whom have attended public schools. My work centers around working with students with disabilities, as well as helping to support students with issues that get in the way of their ability to do well in school. As you might imagine, these issues include things like peer issues, home issues, teacher issues, and mental health struggles.

My opposition to this bill is that I believe it threatens the well-being of students. As an educator, students come into my classroom with a variety of backgrounds and needs. My job is to simply meet them where they are at and educate them the best I can. Over the years I have had several students who were transgender and use a pronoun or name that may be different than assigned at birth. I hope that by using the name and pronoun that they wish to be used in my class helped them to feel more comfortable and allowed me to build a relationship of trust with them. These relationships are key to being a successful learner in the classroom. I have seen students whose parents have struggled with their student's gender dysphoria and have often had school be the only safe place that reinforces their self-worth.

My opposition to this bill is that I believe it threatens the well-being of students. As an educator, students come into my office with a variety of backgrounds and needs. My job is to simply meet them where they are at and help them the best I can. Over the years I have had several students who were transgender and use a pronoun or name that may be different than assigned at birth. I hope that by using the name and pronoun that they wish to be used in my Office helped them to feel more comfortable and allowed me to build a relationship of trust with them. These relationships are key to being a successful learner in the classroom. I have seen

students whose parents have struggled with their student's gender dysphoria and have often had school be the only safe place that reinforces their self-worth.

Additionally, I oppose this bill because it allows for harassment of transgender students by their peers. I find it completely unacceptable that even with a parent's written consent, this bill would allow fellow students to harass and bully a transgender student by not using their preferred name or pronouns, as those who choose to target transgender students cannot be punished. This would create serious issues within a school environment and lead to the decrease in school being a safe place for all students.

Lastly, adolescence is already a difficult time for students as they try to figure out who they are and what they want their roles to be in our society. Transgender youth already have a lot of struggles already in coming to terms with who they are despite societal norms. As research has indicated, like that published in Nature Human Behavior, states that have implement anti-transgender laws typically show an increase up to 72% in suicide rates for those between the ages of 13 and 17. I believe that enacting this bill as state law would lead to a similar effect

in Kansas and I cannot sit idly with the threat that this may put more pressure on a former, current, or future student to question their self-worth.

I hope that you will think about these youth and their self-worth as you consider this bill and vote against it.

ANTHONY MAI

PRIVATE CITIZEN

SB 76

WRITTEN ONLY

OPPONENT

3/4/2025

Thank you Chair and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Anthony Mai and I am a voter in Segwick County / Wichita, KS. I am writing you today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

The ban on name and gender pronouns for minors is - politely - nonsensical. I've had many friends with long name choose to shorten their names, for example 'Ke'Ahjahnae' to 'Keah' or 'Tatiana' to 'Tati' or 'Tate'. If we give the authority to adult figures to only names on minors' birth certificates, then I expect all teachers to learn the names of children who come from immigrant households with less-than-common first and surnames of Vietnamese, Nigerian, or otherwise, decent - like Tuyet, Nhi, Phuong, Duc, Odinuye, Onianwa, Otunye, Chinonye. These are all beautiful names, don't get me wrong, though many Kansas youth choose to shorten or change their names to become more easily pronounced by peers who may have a hard time with different names from tonal languages. If I wanted my 5th grade teacher to call me 'Tony' while my birth certificate states 'Anthony', where would the line stop?

Thank you for hearing my perspective on this bill, I encourage you all to vote NO on the passage of SB 76. Best regards.

Jackie Malec

Private citizen

SB 76

Written only

Opponent

3/3/0025

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Jackie and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing in today to encourage you to vote no on SB 76.

I oppose this bill because all students should be able to use whatever pronoun(s) make them most comfortable in the school setting.

Once again, thank you and please vote no on SB 76.

March 4, 2025  
Testimony to the House Education Committee

NAME: **Leslie D. Mark**

TITLE: **Kansas Citizen / Voter**

BILL NUMBER: **SB 76, AN ACT concerning education; relating to employees of school districts and postsecondary educational institutions; enacting the given name act to require such employees to use the name and pronouns consistent with a student's biological sex and birth certificate; authorizing a cause of action for violations therefor.**

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: **Opponent**

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: **Written Only**

Dear Chair Estes and Members of the Committee,

I wrote to my representatives in the Senate recently Chair Estes, on this bill with its vindictive, destructive intent and asked “What exactly is the future vision you’re projecting of Kansas?” This particular piece of legislation reveals dark hearts and boosts your reputation for shifting public attention *away* from education toward deeper divisions and rancor among Kansans.

SB 76 attacks Kansas’s historically humane advocacy encompassing all students. Any high-quality public education system must be able to focus on the well-being and mental health of young people, promoting policies based on research and evidence, not fear and misunderstanding, to prevent harm. ***Dignity. Respect. Empathy. Kindness. Values of a society*** — and aspirations for its children.

What should we ask of our laws guiding pedagogic practice?

1. *Respect of Individual Identity*

- Recognize that using a person’s preferred name and pronouns is a fundamental act of respect;
- For minors, especially those exploring their gender identity, using the correct pronouns can affirm their sense of self and promote a supportive environment;
- Research shows that misgendered people, especially minors, can become deeply depressed, more anxious and even suicidal when their identity is invalidated;

2. *Engender Excellent Educational Environments*

- Inclusive schools should be places where ALL students feel safe, valued, and accepted;
- Banning preferred names or pronouns makes for more exclusionary environments — increasing bullying and discrimination;
- Young people I know absolutely thrive in settings where they are allowed to authentically express themselves.

3. *Consider Legal and Ethical Impact on Communities*

- Freedom of speech concerns get thrown around a lot — but here SB 76 infringes on freedom of speech by compelling teachers, administrators, etc. to use language or otherwise risk prosecution;
- All law should reflect society's careful weighing of competing rights — here between parental rights and the rights of minor students who may not feel safe or supported at home in expressing their gender identity as well as rights of teachers/administrators to free expression;
- This bill likely violates both state and federal protections re: equality and civil rights, inviting federal courts ruling against such infringement on students' constitutional rights (privacy and freedom of expression).

4. *Evidence Based Policy*

- Policy decisions should be informed by expert recommendations and research in the fields of education, psychology, and social science.
- Promoting dialogue and providing resources to support all identities is far more likely to ensure inclusive school cultures that more easily accommodate all students' diversity.

We're barreling through the KSLeg session — but all we're being offered is tired, irresponsible and... now... debasing & repressive expression for my children's future in Kansas. It's not one that appears sustainable or attractive.

VOTE NO on SB 76.



Leslie D. Mark  
*Mission Hills, HD 25 / Sen 7*

Sandra Martin

Private Citizen

SB 76

Written Only

OPPONENT

3/4/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Sandra Martin and I am a voter in Sumner County/Argonia. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I have been in education for thirty-two years. In that time, I have been asked by a large number of my students every year to call them by a name that is not recorded on their birth certificate. A name is essential to identity. If you call a student by the wrong name, they are quick to correct you as it matters deeply to them. It costs nothing to respect how a person would like to be addressed. If we truly care about life, these lives are just as important. Knowing you are seen, valued, and appreciated as you are, is life affirming. It creates a glow in a person or by contrast, non acceptance dims a person's light. If it is a goal to stop bullying, accepting people for who they are and seeing and appreciating everyone's value, is paramount to succeeding in that goal. Please vote NO on this bill so that this minority group is not harassed, made to feel less than, and made a target for hate speech in our schools. I've seen first hand that most students do not have a problem with calling a trans person by their preferred name and preferred pronouns. Lack of acceptance is taught. Please don't teach our students that hate and ridicule is acceptable by passing this bill. Please vote NO.

Thank you for taking the time to read my viewpoint on this bill and the impact it can have on young people. Again, please vote NO on SB 76. Thank you.

**Name:** Dasan McDonald  
**Title:** Team Leader Pathways Learning Center  
**Type of Testimony :** Written  
**Position:** OPPOSE  
**Name of Committee:** The House Committee on Education  
**Bill:** SB-76  
**Date:** 3/2/3035

Chairman Estes and members of the committee,

My name is Dasan McDonald and I have been in public education for 24 years. I am a previous Kansas Teacher of the Year semi-finalist and I am one of 501 National Board Certified Teachers in the state of Kansas. National Board Certification goes beyond the state requirements for licensure and is considered the most respected professional certification in education. I became a teacher to not only instill the passion for learning but to be a positive influence in the lives of our future. After 19 years in the classroom, I have spent the last 5 years in administration, as a Dean of Students at an elementary school and currently as a team leader at Pathways Learning Center. My current position has been the most rewarding professionally. I get the privilege of leading teachers that work with students with unique needs and potential. We serve students who are under the care of the Department of Children and Families and are working on their personal growth. I love being an educator and working with the students because I get to instill in them a passion for school that they did not know was possible.

I am highly opposed to SB-76. This bill would not only be a violation of human rights and dignity, it would have a negative impact on the educational environment and would lead to increased mental health risks. In 2023, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey through the Center for Disease Control asked students whether they identified as transgender resulting in nationally representative data. This data found that 25.3% of transgender students and 26.4% of questioning students skipped school because they felt unsafe. An estimated 40% of transgender and questioning students were bullied at school, and 72% of transgender students experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. Approximately one fourth of transgender and questioning students attempted suicide in the past year (25.9% and 25.8%, respectively) compared with 11.0% of cisgender females and 5.3% of cisgender males.

I am sharing this testimony to vividly illustrate the real-world consequences of policies that disregard transgender and gender-nonconforming students' identities. I have seen the negative impact on student mental health that a bill like this would induce in my role as a teacher and as an administrator. I remember having a student in my office crying and asking for their teachers to please use their preferred name in class. The teachers were refusing to acknowledge this name because it was not the name on the students birth certificate. The student shared that they were going to talk to their parents about it, but decided against it due to abuse at home. The student shared that they had confided in their teachers with this sensitive information because they believed their teachers cared about them and they thought they would be understanding. The response of the teachers showed this student that they were not valued in



their teachers' class any longer. This student began skipping school, refusing to go to class, and becoming a disruption to the learning environment. The safety that the walls of the school provided had been destroyed by these teachers and their refusal to use a preferred name. The student was angry, hurt, confused, and depressed because there were other students in the class who were called by names that were not on their birth certificates but only because they were perceived to match their gender. This student ended up in an acute stay for a suicidal attempt and ideation. I hope that this testament serves as a confirmation that policies that deny transgender students their identities have devastating consequences for their mental health, well-being, and educational outcomes.

I am confident that The House Committee on Education understands its vital role in protecting the well-being and educational opportunities of all Kansas public education students and will oppose this bill. A bill like this will lead to tangible harm. Rather than focusing on denying students their dignity and identity we should be working on creating policies that allow our students to make our schools safe and inclusive environments for all of our students. The use of a preferred name is not a trivial request, it is an affirmation of a person's very being. As a building leader I play a vital role in establishing a school that is welcoming to all. By creating this environment for all students, students feel valued, see the importance of education in their situation, and have less mental health struggles. All students have the right to be called by their preferred name and pronoun, and their dignity should not be up for debate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of SB-76 and your commitment to the well-being of *all* the students of Kansas.

Sincerely,  
Dasan McDonald

Lara McDonald, M.A.  
7th Grade Communications Teacher  
Oral Testimony/**OPPOSE**  
House Education Committee  
Senate Bill 76  
March 4, 2025

Chairman Estes and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **OPPOSITION** to **BILL SB76**.

My name is Lara McDonald and I have been an educator for 11 years. I teach 7th Grade in USD 437. In fact, in 2020, as one of the top eight Kansas Teachers of the Year, I spoke to the House regarding the mental health of our Kansas students. That was the focus of our entire team of 8, and we were recognized in Senate Resolution 1752 on that very day.

I became a teacher so that I could help students who were like me in 7th grade. I wasn't a good student, my home life was a challenge, and I felt invisible when I walked through all educational institutions. I absolutely love my job, it is the core of who I am, and cannot ever see a time when I will not be advocating for the needs of ALL students.

Having worked with thousands of students closely, in all of the ways a teacher does to include, academically, and emotionally, I can promise you that SB76 will harm Kansas children; both mentally and physically. How can I be sure? Because I have worked with these students, whose own families refuse to use their pronouns in some cases, and these same students spend much of their days crying, hiding, cutting themselves, and practicing other forms of self harm. I have had a minimum of 15 students end up in the hospital after suicide attempts.

This statistic is supported by many studies, but one I will reference is from The Trevor Project. The Trevor Project was created as a support for our LGBTQ+ community in 1998 due to the lack of resources for suicidal young people at that time. In fact, The Trevor Project, was the very first crisis hotline for LGBT+ youth.

In September 26, 2024 statistics in a peer reviewed study of over 61,000 transgender and non-binary youth show that anti-transgender Laws caused a 72% increase in suicide attempts among transgender and nonbinary youth. This is a horrifying number that should cause you to pause: SEVENTY TWO PERCENT increase of young people in the United States of America who wanted to end their life. To put this in perspective for you, out of the 120 students I teach, this would mean that 86 of my kids would attempt to end their lives. This is something that YOU can prevent. YOU can have a positive impact and show the youth of America that you care that they are here. THAT is pro life. I do not want to visit more of my students who are in the hospital, or worse: attend their funeral.

I love my job. I love my students. I believe in their value, and their right to be seen and referenced how they choose. This bill is proposing to take away a basic human right, and I vehemently oppose it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in opposition of Bill SB 76, and thank you for protecting the students in the great state of Kansas.

Sincerely,  
Lara McDonald

Jaimie McReynolds

Private Citizen

SB 76

written only

opponent

3/3/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to express my deep concern in regards to SB 76 with you today. My name is Jaimie McReynolds, and I am a constituent in Johnson County in Lenexa Kansas. I am writing you today to IMPLORE you to vote NO on this dangerous bill, SB 76.

I am a mother to a wonderful, bright, bubbly child who does not fit neatly into a "male" or "female" category. If this bill passes, I fear for the well-being of my child. I fear that school will become a hostile environment where teachers are no longer obligated (nay, banned) from treating each child with the same level of respect and dignity; and I fear that other students will follow suit. I fear that students, like my child, will be stripped of their freedom of expression and bodily autonomy. This bill would make the already difficult, under-resourced, under-paid job of being a teacher even more complicated and difficult.

Please, allow students like my child to exist peacefully and safely in the classroom. Allow teachers to continue to be able to do their jobs and fulfill their obligation of embracing differences in children and respecting them for who they are. I am begging you to protect our kids and our teachers and vote NO on SB 76. Thank you for your time.

Amy Moore

Private citizen

SB76

Written only

Opponent

3/4/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to share my concerns with you about SB76. My name is Amy Moor and I am a constituent in Prairie Village/Johnson County.

I am writing to ask you to oppose SB76. I am a former teacher who had a child that identified as a boy. He had identified that way for a few years before he joined my class. Allowing him to live as his authentic self, a boy, gave him the confidence to make friends and concentrate on learning. I'm so concerned that we are spending time trying to push these children back into the closet by not acknowledging them for who they are.

Thank you for allowing my testimony and I encourage you to vote no on SB76. Thank you

Solomon Moore

School Counselor

[Solomon-91@hotmail.com](mailto:Solomon-91@hotmail.com)

SB76: Use of Pronouns/Name to Match Birth Certificate

Opponent of SB76

Written Testimony

March 4, 2025

Chairwoman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony for Senate Bill 76. As a Kansas school counselor, counselor educator, and community member, I am uniquely aware of the detrimental impact that marginalization and oppression have on our LGBTQIA+ students. This is especially true for transgender and nonbinary youth (and adults). Public education has come a long way in supporting LGBTQIA+ students in the last 10-15 years. Unfortunately, this bill would revert us back into the harmful, toxic environment these students endured in previous decades. Recent cases, such as *Kluge v. Brownsburg Community Schools* (2023) demonstrate the harm and disruption of the learning environment that can occur when school employees don't use a student's chosen name and pronouns. In this case, the court ruled that the school employee's actions of not affirming the transgender students' identities caused harm. I believe this bill would cause immense harm to Kansas gender expansive students.

Additionally, school counselors have ethical standards that guide our profession. Our ethical standards admonish us to foster and affirm all students and their identity (ASCA, 2022). Our ethical standards also have a specific section on marginalized students that advises us to actively work to establish a safe, affirming, and inclusive environment where all members feel acceptance (ASCA, 2022). Unfortunately, SB 76 does not align with these ethical standards. As well, the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) position is that *school staff should address students by their chosen/affirmed name and pronouns corresponding to their gender identity, regardless of whether there has been a legal name change* (2022). The Kansas Can Competency Framework maintained by the Kansas State Department of Education (2024) promotes self-efficacy, empathy, and social awareness. How can we teach and model these skills for students when we are discriminating against and marginalizing an entire group of learners in our schools? Further, the Kansas Educator Code of Conduct includes *nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students*. It also mandates *providing*

*professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner* (KSDE, 2014). SB 76 goes directly against these responsibilities to students.

Addressing students by their chosen/affirmed name and pronouns ensures academic success and literally saves lives. Research shows that school belonging is a protective factor for students' academic success as well as lowers their risk for suicidality. LGBTQIA+ youth are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers (Johns et al., 2020). Additionally, in a 2023 survey by The Trevor Project, they found that 41% of LGBTQIA+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide, including roughly half of transgender youth! Currently, the data for youth suicide in Kansas shows a decrease from 2023 to 2024 (Backman, 2025). While this is wonderful and celebratory data, I fear SB 76 will cause a significant increase in suicidality for transgender and nonbinary students in Kansas if it were to pass. Please don't risk these students' lives. I implore you to vote no on SB 76.

Respectfully,

Solomon Moore, Ph.D., LSC, LPC, NCC

School Counselor



Taylor Morton, Kansas Lobbyist and Policy Analyst  
Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes  
4401 W. 109th Street, Suite 200, Overland Park, KS 66211  
[Taylor.Morton@ppgreatplains.org](mailto:Taylor.Morton@ppgreatplains.org)  
(913) 386-7240  
Regarding SB 76 – Opponent (written testimony)  
March 4, 2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 76 on behalf of Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes (“PPGPV”). PPGPV is the advocacy and political arm of Comprehensive Health of Planned Parenthood Great Plains and Planned Parenthood Great Plains (“PPGP”), which offer compassionate sexual and reproductive health care to patients with four health center locations in Kansas.

SB 76 would effectively ban school and postsecondary employees from using a student’s chosen pronouns and name if they are inconsistent with the student’s birth certificate. Kansas students deserve to feel safe and respected at school, including respect for their names and pronouns. The limited exemptions in SB 76 do not detract from the harm this bill would cause transgender and nonbinary students in Kansas. Simply the introduction of anti-trans legislation like SB 76 is harmful—with 86% of transgender and nonbinary youth reporting a negative impact of such policies on their mental health.<sup>1</sup>

Transgender and nonbinary youth are 2-2.5 times as likely to experience depressive symptoms, seriously consider suicide, and attempt suicide than their cisgender peers.<sup>2</sup> In a 2024 study, transgender and nonbinary youth reported lower rates of suicidality when the people around them respected their pronouns. Those who found their school to be gender-affirming reported better mental health outcomes.<sup>3</sup> Being misgendered is a source of distress for transgender and nonbinary youth, and the use of chosen name and pronouns in social contexts can significantly improve mental health.<sup>4</sup> Teachers, counselors, peers, and other trusted members of school communities can support transgender and nonbinary youth by referring to them by their chosen names. When transgender students’ names and pronouns are respected at school and elsewhere, they report 71% fewer symptoms of severe depression and a 34% decrease in thoughts of suicide.<sup>5</sup>

Transgender students experience a higher prevalence of poor mental health, and a lower prevalence of school connectedness compared with their cisgender peers.<sup>6</sup> School connectedness is a significant protective factor for transgender and nonbinary youth and is associated with decreased anxiety and depression.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, strong student-teacher relationships and higher school connectedness are

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Issues-Impacting-LGBTQ-Youth-MC-Poll\\_Public-2.pdf](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Issues-Impacting-LGBTQ-Youth-MC-Poll_Public-2.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(19\)30922-X/fulltext](https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(19)30922-X/fulltext)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2024/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X18303355?via%3Dihub>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X18300855?via%3Dihub>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/su/su7304a6.htm>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022440521000832>





associated with lower rates of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use among transgender and nonbinary youth.<sup>8</sup> Individuals who are accepted and supported in their gender identity show better mental health and quality of life outcomes.<sup>9</sup>

SB 76 would make it harder for Kansas educational professionals to foster a caring learning environment. Every student has a right to respect in the classroom, including respect for their gender identity and expression. When teachers and staff misgender a student, it opens the door for bullying and harassment on the basis of identity. LGBTQ+ Kansas students deserve to feel nurtured and respected in school. SB 76 undermines that right.

PPGPV strongly urges the Committee to oppose SB 76.

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379718321299?via%3Dihub>

<sup>9</sup> <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2015-39781-006.html>

Rose Murray, MS, APRN  
Mental Health Advanced Practice Registered Nurse  
Senate Bill 76 Opposition - Written Testimony Only  
House Committee of Education  
Email Address: romur20@gmail.com

February 28th, 2025

Chair Estes and House Committee of Education:

My name is Rose Murray and I am writing as a mental health provider in opposition to Senate Bill 76 (SB 76). I have had the honor to be a mental health clinician in our public schools for the past twenty-one years. My whole career has been in mental health, treating adolescents since 1988. I completed my masters in psychiatric nursing at the University of Kansas. I have worked at the state psychiatric hospital level of care and at the Menninger Clinic prior to finding my true calling of working with adolescents in the public school setting. As an APRN I could make more money prescribing medication but I chose to work as a school based therapist to assist our youth in navigating middle school and life. I love my job and can't imagine doing anything else.

My opposition to this bill is that I believe it threatens the well-being and safety of all students. As a school based therapist the students that I provide therapeutic interventions to come with a variety of backgrounds and needs. My job is to simply provide a safe space, meet them where they are, help them navigate school, build friendships, and build coping strategies to confront depression, anxiety, and other emotional struggles. Over the years I have worked with several students who identified as transgender and use a pronoun or name that may be different then that assigned at birth. Some have had 100% support/acceptance from parents and friends while others clearly have not. Often school is the only safe space for these students and reinforces their self-worth. My experience has been that if we can provide safe spaces without shame, harassment, or bullying our youth that identify as something other than the norm thrive and meet life's challenges head on.

Additionally, I oppose this bill because it allows for harassment of transgender students by their peers. I am horrified and find it completely unacceptable that with a parent's written consent to use a name and pronouns other than what was assigned at birth in public schools, but this bill would still allow fellow students to harass and bully a transgender student by not using their preferred name or pronouns. And those who choose to target transgender students could do so without consequences or discipline. This would create serious issues within a school environment and lead to our public schools no longer being a safe place for all students.

Lastly, adolescence is already a difficult time for students as they try to figure out who they are and work to become productive and healthy adults in our society. Transgender youth already have additional struggles then their same age peers with figuring out who they are despite societal norms, lack of support/acceptance by peers and often family members. Transgender

youth's suicide rate is already much higher than their same age peers. So the risk of that increasing as indicated in this article published in *Nature Human Behavior* is frightening. It found an increase up to 72% in suicide rates for those between the ages of 13 and 17 in states that have implement anti-transgender laws. I believe that enacting this bill as state law would lead to a similar effect in Kansas.

I hope that you will think about these youth, their mental health, and their self-worth as you consider this bill and vote in opposition to it.

Sincerely,  
Rose Murray, MS, APRN

# **SB 76 Opposition Testimony (Written-Only)**

## **Testimony to the House Committee on Education**

NAME: Joseph Nicholas

TITLE: Private Citizen

BILL NUMBER: SB 76

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

DATE OF HEARING: March 4, 2025

Chairperson Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Joseph Nicholas and I am a voter in Leawood.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 76, which would prohibit school employees from using a student's chosen name and pronouns. This bill is not only disrespectful and dehumanizing to transgender students, but it also raises serious constitutional concerns, particularly under the First Amendment.

At its core, SB 76 inserts government overreach into personal identity by forcing educators to ignore a student's expressed identity. This is not about education, safety, or fairness—this is about singling out and stigmatizing a vulnerable group of young people. Schools should be places of learning, growth, and support, not environments where students are stripped of their dignity.

Furthermore, compelling school employees to intentionally misgender students contradicts the very principles of respect and ethical conduct that we expect from educators. It also exposes schools to potential legal liability, as similar policies have been struck down or challenged in other states for violating students' rights.

Most fundamentally, I believe in treating people the way they want to be treated. A student's gender identity is a deeply personal matter, and it is not the government's business to interfere in this way. I urge this committee to reject SB 76 and instead focus on policies that support all Kansas students, regardless of gender identity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph Nicholas  
Leawood, KS 66206

Mindy Nickles

Educator

Senate Bill 76 Opposition - Written Testimony Only

House Committee on Education

Email: [mindynickles@gmail.com](mailto:mindynickles@gmail.com)

February 28, 2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to SB 76. My name is Mindy Nickles, and I'm a 5th-grade teacher in Lawrence, Kansas. I had a unique path to teaching. I originally studied Microbiology at Kansas State, working on vaccine research, but it was always education that truly called to me. As a child, school was my safe place, and I wanted to create that same safe, welcoming environment for others. My love of learning drove me to become a teacher, and it's a role I take seriously.

Growing up, I always dreaded the first day of school. While I go by "Mindy" in all areas of life, my birth certificate says "Melinda." I hated having to ask every teacher to call me Mindy—it was a constant reminder that my identity wasn't reflected in my official records. Thankfully, every teacher I had accepted "Mindy" without question. They didn't challenge me or ask my parents for permission. Instead, they listened to me and respected who I was. That simple act of acknowledgment made, and still makes, all the difference. To this day, when I'm called "Melinda," it feels wrong, like someone else is being addressed.

SB 76 would take that basic respect away from many students, including students who are questioning their identity. It would force educators like me to ignore students' identities and deny them the validation they need to feel safe. These children are at a stage where they're beginning to form their sense of self and understanding of the world around them, and it's crucial that they have support as they navigate this process. When students don't feel safe or accepted, it directly affects their ability to focus, engage, and learn. A lack of safety in the classroom creates an environment where students are distracted by fear or anxiety, preventing them from reaching their full potential. I oppose SB 76 because it directly interferes with my ability to do my

job—to educate and support ALL students. My classroom should be a place where all children feel safe to be themselves and to learn without fear of rejection.

I urge you to vote NO on SB 76.

Ann Nobury

PRIVATE CITIZEN

SB 76

WRITTEN ONLY

OPPONENT

3/4/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, I write in opposition to SB 76. My name is Ann Norbury and I'm a voter in Johnson County.

I know many friends and relatives that use a nickname. Everyone knows them by their nickname. They do not carry around a birth certificate. This proposed bill is an overreach by the Legislature. It would invite litigation as it infringes on free speech by educational professional. How would this legislation ever be enforced? It might rely on hearsay evidence of an overheard conversation, it would easily be challenged and would not withstand legal scrutiny. It will lead to costly litigation. Do not burden the state with wasting time and effort of defending this bill.

Thank you for accepting my testimony in opposition to SB 76. I encourage you to vote NO on the passage of SB 76.



## **SB 76 Testimony 2025-03-04**

### **House Education Committee:**

**I am writing in opposition to SB 76, being taken up by the House Education Committee this week. This law would be a violation of students' privacy, and put their safety at risk.**

- When teachers or staff misgender or deadname a student, it opens the door for the student's peers to do the same and creates an environment where the student is more likely to get bullied or harassed.

**This is a politicized attack on our teachers and other educational professionals such as professors, counselors, principals, librarians and more.**

- The damages section in this bill is overly broad and paves the way for litigation based on overhearing conversations. The bill does not require the person who sues for damages to be involved in the conversation at all, which allows for anyone overhearing a conversation to bring litigation.
- Even if an education professional wanted to follow this law perfectly, it would be nearly impossible for them to protect themselves from the risk of litigation. There is no effective means of ensuring every school employee and student has the knowledge of every student's name and sex listed on their birth certificate, nor should there be.
- Politicians should stop this invasion into classrooms and schools across the state and into the lives of students and families they don't know. This reckless use of government as a bludgeon would undermine the ability of educators to do their jobs and create healthy learning environments.

Teachers have enough to worry about trying to teach the curriculum to students on a daily basis. This will serve as yet one more effort to drive good teachers out of the state of Kansas. Teachers are focused on teaching, not on the student's gender identity. Politicians should stay out of this and let teachers do their job.

Melinda Parks, lifelong Kansan, parent of Kansas educator

Lenexa, KS

Rev. Jacob Poindexter

Pastor, Wichita United Church of Christ

SB 76

Written Only

Opponent

3/3/2025

Chair Estes and Members of the Committee, thank you for accepting my testimony and thoughts on SB 76. My name is Rev. Jacob Poindexter and I am a voter and pastor of Wichita United Church of Christ in Wichita, Kansas. I am writing today on behalf of myself and also officially on behalf of my congregation to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

As a pastor and congregation, we proclaim that every person is made in the image of God. We are a community of people who bring many gender expressions and identities. Out of respect and love, we gather together as followers of Jesus bringing our authentic selves and we chose to be the church together.

What name we were given or chose to be called makes no difference to our inherent value. However, names do have meaning to us in our everyday lives. The names we use to identify ourselves to our friends and teachers, whether that be a given name, a chosen name, or a nickname, should not be a concern of state law. Please stop politicizing the identities of children for partisan and ideological purposes. It has a direct impact of harm to children within my congregation. Nothing about this bill protects them from the growing abuse and state sanctioned bullying that this bill would create.

It is unreasonable to require that every time a child uses a name not on their birth certificate that they must have a signed letter from their parent or guardian to give to every teacher or school official they encounter. How would people even know what name is on that certificate? Creating fear seems to be the only real purpose.

It is clear that this bill is cultivated out of a spirit of hatred toward transgender people. For now that hatred is focused on children under the guise of protecting them. But it is clear it will not stop here if given the chance. Please take a stand and make this onslaught stop. It has gone too far already.

Thank you for accepting my testimony concerning this bill. I encourage you all to vote no on the passage of SB 76.

Private citizen

Private citizen

SB 76

Written only

Chair Estes

3/4/2025

I am a registered voter in Kansas

Students should have the right to be called by their chosen name and sex. It should be left up to the teacher

Thank you