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SB 302 prohibiting phones in schools

Neutral- in person- oral

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Hello, Chairwoman and Education Committee members, my name is Laryn Young, a senior at Turner High School. We maintain a neutral stance on this bill due to the vague definitions it uses. This legislation prohibits not only smartwatches but all types of watches in schools. Furthermore, the ban on wireless earbuds and headphones leaves schools with limited and unrealistic alternatives: either replace all devices lacking headphone jacks (as Apple stopped including them in 2018) or provide school-issued wireless earbuds. The execution of this bill would create significant logistical challenges; upon entering the school, instead of receiving a warm welcome, students would be immediately instructed to surrender their phones, watches, and earbuds, followed by a search of their bags to ensure compliance. This is not the environment we wish to foster for our children. Although this may appear to be a straightforward procedure, in a school with even just 1,000 students, it would consume a considerable amount of time at the start of the day to secure all items, and again at the end of the day, detracting from essential instructional time. I can easily envision this process taking 40 minutes of instructional time for merely 20 minutes at the beginning and end of each day. While I agree that a solution is necessary to address phone usage in schools, I urge you to allow our school districts the autonomy to make the most appropriate decisions for our schools and students. Thank you for your time.

I will stand for questions.

