

Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
V Camp  
Private Citizen

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony against Senate Bill 76, and I will try to keep this brief.

My chosen name is V, short for Vanessa, and I am a Kansas resident who is incredibly concerned about this bill and its plans to strip away chosen names. I am a public librarian who recently campaigned for (and won) the ability for my library system to implement the use of chosen names in addition to full legal names.

This bill has the potential to impact a large number of students across all age ranges, from elementary school children to non-traditional students going back to class to earn degrees and certifications later in life, as well as all individuals employed at any place of education.

This bill would make it impossible for students and workers to:

- Use a middle name instead of a first name
- Use any type of shortened version of their name
- Use a name that better fits their identity
- In the case of international students, use a chosen Western name

In the two years since my library system has implemented what we call a 'preferred name' procedure, I can confirm that the vast majority of people who use a name different from their legal name fall into one of the first two categories.

While this bill may have been intended to force transgender individuals to use their legal name instead of a name they chose (thus dehumanizing them and denying them even a scrap of respect), it has the power to harm a much larger group of people. Not a single one of these people deserve to have their names, the single word they use to define themselves, ripped away from them. Each and every one of us has a right to a name.

I ask that you think of these other groups of people that would be impacted by this when you make this decision, if the humanity of myself and my trans siblings is not enough to sway your minds. Please, do not allow this bill to pass.

Once again, I thank you for the chance to submit this document, and I thank you for taking my words into consideration.

Janelle Arnett Campbell  
janelleacampbell@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/6/2025

## OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Janelle Arnett Campbell and I am a voter in Wyandotte County. I encourage you to vote NO on SB 76.

I oppose this bill on both a personal and professional level. As a mom of now-adult children who had friends with a variety of pronouns, I know how damaging this bill would be for all students and employees at schools across the state.

Not only does it violate a student's privacy but it would increase the stress, anxiety and fear of students who are already in a vulnerable position. We know that students who identify as queer, gay or transgender already face peer bullying and a high risk of suicide. Eliminating school as a safe place for them would certainly increase their risk.

As a school social worker, this bill is a direct violation of the social work code of ethics to provide dignity and choice to empower each person. If this bill passes, many school personnel would be in a conflictual position of choosing between following the new law OR honoring existing privacy laws and ethical professional standards.

Thank you for considering this testimony. I urge you to vote NO on the passage of SB 76.

Christie Carter  
ctant@mac.com  
Private Citizen  
2/7/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson 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 Christie Carter and I am a voter in Overland Park. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

As a parent of a Kansas student, I oppose this bill. Not only is it a violation of privacy, the damages section in this bill is overly broad. It 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, allowing anyone overhearing a conversation to bring litigation. This opens the door to lawsuits that could be weaponized against teachers for a variety of reasons. We need our teachers to be comfortable within the classroom so that they can teach our students well.

I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no on the passage of SB 76. Thank you for your time.

JACINTA CARTER  
jacinta.m.carter@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Jacinta Carter and I am a voter in Decatur County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I have been teaching in Kansas schools for over a decade and have taught every level from Kindergarten through college sophomores. Every classroom is different, just as every student is different. But the one thing every child has in common is that they need a safe educational environment if we expect them to learn and grow. How can we ask kids to sit in our classrooms day after day, studying, writing essays, solving math equations, and conducting science experiments if we are intentionally making their world more dangerous?

Because I teach in a rural Kansas district, there are few students here who use pronouns outside those they were assigned at birth. Not because we don't have trans or non-binary students here, but because they are afraid of what might happen to them if they dare to express their true identities. There was already an abundance of hate and vitriol aimed at these students in previous years, and the current administration is only encouraging that behavior to escalate. These students are too young to remember the violent death of Matthew Shepard, but their teachers are not.

Not only does this bill put students in danger, but their teachers as well. With the bill's ambiguous language, a misunderstood comment – overheard in passing -- could lead to a lawsuit. Teachers have been told for decades that we are expected to take a bullet for our students. Now we're being forced to decide if we are willing to face possible termination or arrest simply because we choose to treat our students with dignity and acknowledge them by the names and pronouns that make them feel seen and safe. How can you ask teachers to protect our students while simultaneously forbidding us from treating them with this most basic form of respect?

Thank you for your time. I encourage all of you to vote NO to the passage of SB 76. Thank you.

**SB 75 Opposition Testimony**  
**Senate Education Committee**  
**January 28, 2025**  
**Teresa A. Chapman: tc2ks@cox.net**  
**Grandparent, former teacher, private citizen**

Chair Erickson & members of the committee,

Thank you for considering this testimony. I am writing to oppose SB 75.

As a grandparent and former teacher, I feel strongly about taking money which could be used to strengthen our public schools that serve all kids. I feel that our tax dollars should support public education. My grandchildren cannot afford a private school. One grandchild needs special services which a private school would not provide.

I have seen the successes of many former students. I taught in public schools.

Please vote against SB75.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Teresa A. Chapman  
Constituent from Wichita, KS

Randy Childers  
rrrandy@gmail.com  
private citizen  
2/7/2025

opponent

Thank you, Chairman Erickson and committee members, for giving me a moment to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Randy Childers, a voter in Johnson County / Merriam. I'm writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I know several trans kids, and several trans adults. I'm aware of how delicate this situation can be -- parents are not always on the same page as the kids. I think that requiring written permission from the parents in order to use the preferred name and gender of a student will often end up being a kind of uncomfortable, state-sanctioned bullying against the child.

Thank you all again for giving me a moment to share my thoughts on this; please vote NO on SB 76. Thank you.

Andrew Christensen

Bonner Springs, KS

SB 76

To the Kansas Senate Committee on Education:

I am a constituent writing to you today about the use of pronouns and names as laid out in SB 76 and would like you to OPPOSE this bill. This is written-only testimony about this topic.

The use of pronouns and chosen names for people in the transgender community is a very hot topic right now but I feel this bill goes into the territory of government overreach. Firstly, many people like to go by a chosen name of some kind instead of the name on their birth certificate. Some go by a shortened version of their name, a nickname, or their middle name. This bill, as written, would also block anyone using any name not on their birth certificate. I also believe this violates freedom of speech/expression as teachers should have free will to call students by their preferred name and pronouns that would make school a safe environment conducive to learning. Blocking the use of the correct name and pronouns would cause the student distress and prevent them from getting the best education possible.

Another thing this would do is cause suicidal thoughts and actions to increase in affected students. Multiple studies have shown that using a person's correct name and pronouns (their chosen ones) decreases the likelihood of suicide by a large margin. Forcing deadnaming (using a person's former name) and misgendering (using the incorrect pronouns for someone) like this bill would do would increase emotional distress, heightening anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts.

If a school notifies parents about students wanting to use a different name/ pronouns because of this bill then that puts some students at physical risk and emotional risk. Deadnaming and misgendering at home would cause more distress and some parents become violent and physically attack their child when the child comes out as transgender or if the parent finds out another way, such as results from this bill.

For the safety of our Kansas students, I urge you to vote NO on SB 76.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Andrew Christensen

*He/They*

Claire Clark  
claireclark2003@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/10/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my written testimony in opposition to SB 76. My name is Claire Clark, and I am a voter in Wichita, KS. As a concerned Kansan, I am writing today to urge you to vote NO on SB 76, a bill that not only disregards the rights and dignity of transgender students but also creates dangerous precedents for free speech, privacy, and education in our state.

SB 76 is a direct attack on the rights and well-being of Kansas students. By preventing teachers, administrators, and staff from using a student's chosen name and pronouns without written parental consent, this bill places an undue burden on transgender youth, who already face higher risks of bullying, discrimination, and mental health struggles. Schools should be a place of safety, support, and learning, not a place where students are forced to defend their own identities.

This bill also fails to consider that many students may not be in safe or supportive home environments. Forcing students to obtain parental permission before their identities are recognized could place them at risk of rejection or harm. Every student deserves to feel seen and respected in their school community, regardless of whether their parents approve of their identity.

Additionally, the damages clause in this bill is excessively broad and opens the door for unwarranted litigation against educators, students, and school districts. Allowing anyone who merely overhears an interaction to sue for damages creates an unmanageable legal burden on schools and higher education institutions. Teachers and staff should not have to fear lawsuits simply for treating their students with basic respect and dignity.

Furthermore, SB 76 misuses the principle of free speech by claiming that restricting students' names and pronouns enhances classroom debate. Free speech is meant to protect individuals from government overreach, not to justify state-imposed discrimination. This bill would suppress the rights of transgender students while falsely claiming to promote open discussion.

Finally, SB 76 places unrealistic enforcement expectations on teachers and administrators. It is not feasible, or ethical, for school staff to police every student's legal documents before addressing them by name. This bill imposes unnecessary administrative duties on schools, diverting attention from actual education.



I thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and consider the consequences of SB 76. This bill does not protect students, it endangers them. It does not promote free speech, it weaponizes it against marginalized youth. And it does not respect education, it politicizes it at the expense of teachers and students alike.

For these reasons, I strongly encourage you to vote NO on SB 76. Thank you for your time and consideration.

## **Opposition Testimony for SB 76 For the Senate Education Committee**

**February 10, 2025**

**Kayla Clark**

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on SB 76.

I am an attorney licensed in the State of Kansas. I am writing testimony in my own individual capacity. My views do not reflect that of my employer.

I assume you will have plenty of testimony submitted about the harmful effects of this bill on the trans community, but I would like to supplement that testimony with an analysis and critique of proposed section (e) - or the damages clause. The clause states that “a person harmed” by a violation of the proposed statute can bring suit for damages, injunctive relief, attorney fees, and “any other appropriate relief.” This language is vague, overly broad, and would cause judicial chaos if enacted and utilized.

The damages clause seems to be intended to cover damages from three categories: adverse employment action in section (c), school disciplinary action in section (d), and some amorphous and vague damage in section (b). “A person” (seemingly any person at all) could bring damages against an unclear defendant, for an adverse employment action due to misgendering a student, for a school disciplinary action towards a student misgendering another student, or for an alleged damage caused by using a pronoun or title “inconsistent” with a student’s biological sex.

To demonstrate the peculiarity of SB 76’s damages clause, I will compare other damages clauses in Kansas statutes. K.S.A. 44-831 also deals with alleged employment violations, and clearly states that any person aggrieved by any violation of the constitutional labor organization membership article may bring an action to collect actual damages sustained due to the violation. This statute clearly defines who an aggrieved person is and what they can bring damages for. SB 76(e) provides no such specificity, and I reckon to say that it does not do so because further specificity would bring to light the constitutional issues with allowing an amorphous party to bring a cause of action due to an amorphous damage by an unnamed tortfeasor, specifically due to that tortfeasor’s unharmed speech.

Other statutes that address damages are within the Kansas Automobile Repairs Act. This is an Act that I deal with daily at my job as a personal injury attorney. The Act outlines what an injured person is in K.S.A. 40-3103. K.S.A. 40-3117 outlines conditions precedent to recovering for pain and suffering in a tort in order to promote judicial efficiency. SB 76(e) provides no such clarification or conditions. It opens the door to frivolous lawsuits for an unclear amount of damages and unclear injunctive relief.

Any law student will tell you that The Black's Law Dictionary is a helpful and essential tool for learning the basics of law. Such source defines "damages" as "a pecuniary compensation or indemnity, which may be recovered in the courts by any person who has suffered loss, detriment, or injury, whether to his person, property or rights, through the unlawful act or omission of another." I struggle, as a proud member of the Kansas bar, to find any sort of loss, detriment, or injury to an unnamed person in the supposed crosshairs of hearing a trans child being called by the correct name and pronouns.

A 2022 UCLA study found that 1.02% of Kansas youth ages 13-17 identified as transgender. I ask you to imagine being a child in this small, marginalized population, and learning that your legislator would like to open the door to any person suing any other person who respects you for who you are. I know you will get countless pages of testimony explaining the harm and cruelty this bill will promote. There is no other damages clause that I could find that is as broad, amorphous, and inefficient as the one proposed in SB 76.

Respectfully,

Kayla Clark, JD

Shane Clark  
shealan.clark@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/7/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erikson 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 Shane Clark and I am a voter in Saline County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I stand before you not just as a concerned citizen, but as a transgender individual. Like many Kansans, I believe in the values of community, respect, and looking out for our neighbors. And it's because of these values that I find SB76 so deeply troubling. This bill targets some of the most vulnerable members of our community – transgender and gender diverse youth – and seeks to erase their very existence within our schools. And in its sweeping attempt to control language, it goes so far as to effectively outlaw the use of nicknames! Seriously?

Think about it. How many of us have ever gone by a nickname? How many teachers refer to students by shortened versions of their names, or a name they prefer? This isn't just about transgender students. This is about telling every student in Kansas they can't use a nickname, a common and harmless practice for generations. It's government micromanaging the most basic interactions in our schools, and it's frankly ridiculous. Are we really going to waste taxpayer dollars on policing whether a student is called "Liz" instead of "Elizabeth"? This is the level of intrusion SB76 proposes, and it demonstrates just how out of touch this bill is with the realities of everyday life.

For me, and for countless other transgender people, the ability to use my chosen name and pronouns is not a trivial matter. It's about more than just words; it's about recognizing my fundamental identity. It's about feeling seen, respected, and safe. Imagine being told that the name you've chosen, the name that reflects who you truly are, is suddenly forbidden. Imagine the daily pain of being constantly misgendered, of being told that your very existence is invalid. This is the reality SB76 would impose on transgender students across Kansas, and it's the same kind of overbearing control it seeks to exert over even the simplest things, like nicknames. I remember the fear and anxiety I felt before I came out. The weight of hiding my true self was immense. Finding the courage to live authentically was one of the hardest things I've ever done. And now, this bill seeks to strip away that same opportunity for other young people. It tells them that their feelings, their identities, are not valid, that they don't belong. This is not the Kansas way. We care for our neighbors, all of our neighbors, regardless of how they identify or who they love.

This bill isn't about "free speech" as its proponents claim. It weaponizes free speech to silence and erase transgender students. The right to free speech does not extend to deliberately misgendering and deadnaming someone, actions that inflict real emotional and psychological harm. For transgender students, being addressed by their chosen name and pronouns is not a matter of preference; it's a matter of basic dignity and respect. Denying them this right exposes them to increased risks of bullying, harassment, and even violence. Respecting a student's

identity is crucial for their well-being and academic success. 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.

Furthermore, the damages clause within SB76 is deeply troubling. It allows anyone who claims to be "harmed" by the use of correct pronouns and names to sue for monetary damages, regardless of whether they are directly involved in the interaction. This provision is an open invitation for frivolous lawsuits, creating a chilling effect on educators and fostering a climate of fear and censorship within our schools. Imagine the administrative burden and legal costs this will impose on already stretched-thin educational institutions. How can teachers possibly ensure they know every student's birth-assigned name and sex? This is both impractical and an invasion of student privacy.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to politicize the identities of transgender youth. It interferes with the ability of educators to create safe and inclusive learning environments and undermines their professional judgment. It pits teachers against students and creates a climate of fear and uncertainty. Politicians should not be meddling in these personal matters and jeopardizing the well-being of our students, or dictating whether a student can be called "Bobby" instead of "Robert."

SB76 is not about protecting free speech or parental rights. It is about discrimination, plain and simple. It is a reckless and harmful piece of legislation that will have devastating consequences for transgender and gender diverse students in Kansas. It flies in the face of our Kansas values of community and caring for our neighbors. And it's also just plain silly. I urge you to reject this bill and uphold the rights and dignity of all students.

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

Opposition Testimony for SB 76

For the Senate Education Committee on February 10th, 2025

Mia Colanero

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on SB 76.

Kansas ranks high in education. That is something I am proud of as a Kansan. I fear this bill would be detrimental to our education system.

I am in opposition to this bill because the way that educators and school employees address and engage with their students shapes the education that that student receives. If a student does not feel understood by their teacher, their learning will be significantly affected. Teachers need to be able to meet students where they are at in order to provide successful education.

Kids should have the right to create a sense of identity. Growing up, half of my class went by nicknames. This is a normal part of growing up, and forcing teachers to ignore this reality is harmful.

Please rethink this bill as it will do more harm than good. Protect our student's freedom to be kids.

Thank you.

Best Regards,  
Mia Colanero

Autumn Colbeth  
sitruso@yahoo.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

OPPONENT

Hello there Chairman Erickson and the Members of the Committee. Thank you for letting me share my thoughts on SB 76 with you. My name is Autumn and I am a voter in Lawrence, KS. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

Everyone else who writes to you will do a better job than I at expressing how this is an attack on our rights as citizens and the way this is obstructing our freedom of speech. My intentions is to bring up how this could affect everyone involved. Trans or not. Children often go by names other than their chosen name. For example, would a teacher be forced to call a child Robert instead of Bob? Katherine instead of Kathy? Elizabeth instead of Lizzy or Eliza or Lisa? Or a coach having to call a child their official name instead of a nickname they've earned on the field? This is not only unnecessarily restrictive to those who are gender non-conforming, but also to many of the cisgendered kids who will be attending school. And for what purpose? To make trans kids lives harder?

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

## **Written Opponent Testimony of SB 76**

For the Senate Education Committee

February 10, 2025

Liz Collins

Private Citizen

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Liz Collins (they/them/theirs), and I am a voter in Manhattan, Kansas. I am writing to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I am a lifelong Kansan currently pursuing my masters at the University of Kansas, and I identify as a non-binary individual. It wasn't until I was in college that I realized and came to terms with the fact that I am non-binary, and over the years I have found ways to present myself to the world that feels more true to who I am. One of those ways is with my preferred pronouns, as I feel the most comfortable in my body when people use the correct pronouns to refer to me. However, this relies solely on the people I interact with taking the time to learn what my pronouns are and use them correctly. When I hear someone misgender me, it can be upsetting and depressing, and it's discouraging to think about the amount of times I get misgendered when I'm not there to defend myself.

While I did not socially transition during my childhood, I know what it is like to try to stand up for your identity when it is different from the status quo in a university setting. I can only imagine the discrimination that I would have faced if I had come out during high school, and bills like SB 76 will only make things worse for the individuals brave enough to live authentically as themselves. Trans students already face many difficulties, and they do not need to bear any further burdens.

This proposed bill will negatively affect employees and students in K-12 and post-secondary schools throughout the state. If passed, this law would be a violation of student privacy, and forcing staff to refer to trans students by their deadname and pronouns that match their gender assigned at birth out of fear of legal action. SB 76 exploits the right of free speech and expression of trans students in the name of "free speech and academic freedom" for adults, while simultaneously limiting free speech for employees of the DOE. Additionally, this bill would open the doors for further discrimination against these students. If staff are not allowed to use the preferred name and pronouns for their students, this will encourage other students to bully and harass their classmates. This is unnecessarily cruel to transgender students, who already face daily discrimination in our current political climate. For many students, their teachers may be the only adults in their lives who are aware of their gender identity and



use their preferred pronouns. Taking away this freedom for teachers and other staff will be a death sentence for many transgender youth in Kansas.

This bill is an attack on the transgender youth and the hardworking staff of Kansas schools. Kansan politicians do not need to spend their time on a predatory bill that impacts a small minority of students. If signed into law, SB 76 would also be incredibly difficult to enforce and would lead to unnecessary legal battles due to the damages clause. There are more important issues for the state to focus on during this legislative session. Thank you for reading my story and opinions, and I implore you to vote NO on SB 76.

KIMBERLY COMSTOCK  
comstockkimberly@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson 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 Kimberly Comstock and I am a voter in Douglas County, Lawrence. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76"

As a mother of school-aged children in Lawrence, this is not what I want our state to focus on when it comes to Kansas education. Our school district, facing difficult and often devastating school closures as a way of managing resources and budget shortfalls, needs the state to direct resources on funding education, not policing speech.

If our teachers and the adjunct personal employed to facilitate learning are further stretched to include the enforcement of this legislation, is that time, energy, and money well spent? I want our educational community to be present with the in-time needs of students sitting in the classrooms discussing the curriculum at hand. The state can not take the place of and should not try to dictate these individual interactions. The community around these individual students, families, and schools know their situations intimately.

If we can't count on our principals, teachers, and staff to use common sense, compassion and understanding when shepherding our children, then we need to hold those persons accountable not by litigation, but by the processes already present in the school system.

The educational institutions we hold to care and instruct our youth are building the future of Kansas. Can we afford to pass legislation where teachers and other state education employees worry about litigation based on overheard conversations? 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.

State government should be supporting classrooms by raising funds, balancing the budget, and using research-based evidence, not political agendas, to make policy. Classrooms are spaces of learning and not battlegrounds for politically motivated state-imposed speech regulation and enforcement.

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

**Opponent Testimony of SB 76**  
**For the Senate Education Committee**  
**Date of Hearing: 2/10**  
**Cynthia Coufal**  
**Kansas School Counselor and Cynthia Coufal Coaching**

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 76. As a school counselor, I am deeply concerned about the harmful impact this bill would have on students' mental health and well-being.

SB 76 would require school district and postsecondary employees to use the name and pronouns listed on a student's birth certificate, with legal consequences for violations. This mandate conflicts with the ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), which emphasizes fostering inclusive and affirming environments for **all** students. Research consistently shows that affirming a student's chosen name and pronouns improves mental health outcomes and reduces the risk of depression and suicide.

A study of transgender and gender-nonconforming youth found that using chosen names in multiple settings was associated with significantly lower rates of depression and suicidal ideation. Additionally, the Trevor Project reports that transgender and nonbinary youth whose pronouns are respected by those around them attempt suicide at half the rate of those whose pronouns are ignored. Denying students this affirmation would create an unsafe school environment, leading to increased anxiety, depression, and academic disengagement.

Gender identity is an internal and deeply personal aspect of a student's development, distinct from the sex assigned at birth. Just as people have historically used nicknames or preferred names to express their identity, chosen names are an essential part of self-affirmation. Respecting a student's identity is a matter of dignity, safety, and fundamental human decency.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote against SB 76. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
**Cynthia Coufal**  
Kansas School Counselor  
Cynthia Coufal Coaching

Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Mary Crawford  
Private Citizen

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 76.

As a Kansas resident, child of a veteran KS educator and marketing professional who understands the critical importance of creating safe, inclusive environments, I am deeply concerned about the harmful implications of this proposed legislation. From my personal experience, I can confidently say that SB 76 will do nothing to protect or harm non-trans youth and families – it will only serve to damage the wellbeing of trans youth and their families.

**This legislation is fundamentally flawed for several crucial reasons:**

- **It removes local control:** SB 76 takes away local control from schools/districts to make decisions on a case by case basis.
- **It violates constitutional rights:** SB 76 directly violates educators' free speech protections under the First Amendment.
- **It puts educators in an impossible position:** Teachers, who are often the first line of support for struggling students, would be forced to choose between their professional instinct to support students and avoiding legal consequences. My father, Paul Corcoran taught in USD 497 for 47 years and made it his mission to ensure every student felt seen and respected. Because of my father, I've witnessed firsthand how simple acts of acceptance can transform a student's educational experience.
- **It creates hostile learning environments:** Research from the American Psychological Association shows that anti-transgender legislation directly correlates with increased anxiety, depression, and suicide risk among LGBTQ+ youth. The Trevor Project's 2024 National Survey confirms that LGBTQ+ youth with access to affirming spaces show significantly better mental health outcomes.
- **It compromises educational safety:** Recent studies indicate that transgender and nonbinary youth are already significantly less likely to feel comfortable talking to teachers or school adults (12% compared to 18% of their peers) about mental health concerns. This legislation would only widen this dangerous gap.

The most basic obligation we have as a society is to protect our children – all of them. This bill does the opposite. It institutionalizes harm under the guise of protection and directly violates educators' First Amendment rights.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Corcoran Crawford, Private Citizen and Lifelong Kansan

AMANDA D. CUNDY  
cundy.mandy@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Thank you Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Amanda Cundy and I am a voter in Sedgwick County/Maize. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 76.

I am submitting this written testimony in strong opposition to SB 76, a bill that would ban K-12 and post-secondary employees from using a minor student's chosen name and pronouns unless they match the student's birth certificate or the employee has written parental consent. This bill is not only harmful but also legally questionable, placing students and educators in an untenable position.

Every Kansas student has the right to be called by their gender-affirming name and pronouns. Schools have a legal and ethical obligation to respect students' gender identities, even if they have not yet been able to legally update their names or gender markers. Denying this fundamental right isolates transgender and gender-diverse students, exposing them to higher risks of bullying, mental health struggles, and academic disengagement.

As a parent of a transgender daughter, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that affirmation and respect have on a child's well-being. When my daughter is referred to by her correct name and pronouns, she thrives—she feels safe, valued, and able to focus on her education. However, when she is misgendered or deadnamed, it causes deep distress and anxiety, reinforcing feelings of isolation. No student should have to endure that kind of harm, especially in a place that is supposed to be safe and nurturing.

Furthermore, the damages clause included in this bill is dangerously broad, allowing anyone who overhears the use of gender-affirming names or pronouns to sue for monetary damages. This provision invites frivolous litigation, creating an undue burden on educators and institutions, and weaponizes the legal system against teachers, administrators, and school staff. Even those who attempt to follow the law to the letter may find themselves at risk, as there is no feasible way for educators to verify every student's birth certificate information before addressing them in daily interactions.

Beyond its legal ramifications, SB 76 creates an environment of fear and division in our schools. By politicizing the basic human dignity of transgender students, it emboldens harassment and discrimination, making schools less safe and inclusive. Additionally, the enforcement of this bill would place a significant administrative and financial strain on schools and higher education institutions, diverting critical resources from student learning to unnecessary legal defenses and policy enforcement mechanisms.

Kansas educators work tirelessly to create supportive and effective learning environments for all students. SB 76 undermines this mission, compromising student well-being and placing educators in an impossible position. As a parent, I want my daughter—and every child in Kansas—to feel safe, respected, and supported in their school community.

Thank you for hearing my testimony on this bill. I strongly urge you to oppose this harmful and unnecessary legislation and to instead support policies that foster inclusion, respect, and academic success for all students. I encourage you all to vote no on the passage of SB 76.

Thank you,  
Amanda Cundy

Max DaMetz  
dametzmax@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/10/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak about SB 76 today. My name is Max DaMetz, and I am a voter in Leavenworth County. I ask that the committee vote No on SB 76.

Growing up, teaching has always been held in high regard in my family. My father, a dedicated educator for the past 30 years, instilled in me a deep respect for the profession. His colleagues, who became mentors to my siblings and me, reinforced this belief. Today, my oldest sister proudly carries on this tradition as a teacher, making a meaningful impact on her students' lives. A teacher's most critical role is one of guidance and mentorship to the next generation in helping students achieve success both in and beyond the classroom. This bill undermines that mission through damaging trust and relationships that are at the very core of effective education. It would force teachers to disregard the dignity and respect that every student deserves.

The heart of this bill is the removal of the rights of self-expression from transgender students. Oftentimes, teachers are an important source of support, collaborating closely with parents. By placing barriers on teachers from using the name and pronouns a student has affirmed, SB 76 isolates trans students, emboldening bullying and harassment in schools while simultaneously tying teachers' hands, leaving them afraid of legal consequences for simply showing compassion.

If this bill passes, it will not only hurt transgender students who deserve safe and supportive learning environments but also worsen Kansas' ongoing teacher shortage. As someone who values the relationships I have built with my former mentors and as a member of a family deeply connected to the teaching profession, I urge you to consider the long-term consequences this could have on our state and future generations.

Again, I am grateful for this opportunity to testify, and respectfully I ask that you vote No on the passage of SB 76. Thank you.

Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Sebastian De La Rosa  
Private Citizen

My name is Sebastian De La Rosa. I am a resident of Kansas. I also work here in Kansas as a licensed social worker. As a social worker it is part of our Code of Ethics to engage in social and political action to ensure equality for all. That is part of the reason why I am submitting testimony today.

SB76 would cause harm to students in the state of Kansas. First of all, it can cause students to be forcibly outed to their parents since schools and universities would not be able to use chosen names or pronouns without parental permission. This could directly harm minors who live with families that might be unsupportive. In addition this bill violates student's privacy rights. This bill also causes harm by creating a hostile learning environment for transgender students as it basically gives the green light for individuals in public schools or universities to harass and bully transgender students. We have plenty of research that indicates that misgendering (using the incorrect pronouns) and deadnaming (using a transgender person's birth name) causes mental and emotional harm. All students in Kansas deserve a learning environment free of harassment where they can learn and this includes transgender students whether or not someone personally supports them.

I also have issues with this bill extending to universities. Let me be clear, this does not mean it is acceptable treatment for minors. Again all Kansas students deserve to be respected as people and have a non hostile learning environment. However, this bill is extending parental permission for adults. That is a slippery slope to take regarding the rights of legal adults. It is for these reasons that I oppose this bill.



## Oppositional Testimony of SB76 For the Senate Education Committee

2.10.2025

Tiffany DeMoss

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 76 as a proud school counselor. Firstly, this bill contradicts itself throughout, stating that it will apply to post secondary education (where a majority of students are 18+) while also stating that students are definitionally “unemancipated individuals under 18 years of age.”

People who work with children don’t go into the profession for the money or the fame, we go into the profession because we care about students, we want to help students succeed. Actively erasing the identities of students, misgendering and deadnaming them is harmful. The Trevor Project’s 2023 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People found that 41% of LGBTQ young people seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, a number that had decreased 4% from the 2022 survey. Among those differences, there was a 6% decrease in LGBTQ young people reporting experiencing symptoms of anxiety and 4% decrease in experiencing symptoms of depression (TheTrevorProject, 2023).

In the psychology world, there’s a saying “you have to maslow before you can bloom” stating that according to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, (a pyramid that starts with basic needs at the bottom and grows into more complex needs,) students must have their basic needs met before they can work through Bloom’s Taxonomy (Bloom’s Taxonomy begins at the bottom of the pyramid with **remember**, students start by recalling information they

were taught and eventually get to the top and **create** their own work). Simply put, if a child's basic needs, such as having a safe environment to learn, are not being met they will not be able to learn let alone create their own work. According to The Trevor Projects national survey, 27% of transgender and nonbinary young people reported that they have been physically threatened or harmed in the past year due to their gender identity, which was down 10% from 2022. The 2023 survey also finds that 53% of LGBTQ young people reported being verbally harassed because people thought they were LGBTQ, and 32% weren't allowed to dress in the way that fit their gender identity or expression (TheTrevorProject, 2023).. School is supposed to be a place where all students feel safe. If students are not given basic human rights how can we expect them to focus on learning?

In middle school I decided that I wanted to work in the mental health field, I saw people struggle around me with little to no help and I wanted to be that help for them and others going through similar struggles. Adults regularly told me that I'd change my mind, that I'd bounce between potential future careers before finding the one I wanted. Yet as I neared my high school graduation I only leaned farther into the mental health field. In fact, my senior year of high school I realized that I wanted to be a school counselor. I completed four years of undergrad with a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology and went on to complete three years of graduate school receiving a Masters in School Counseling. I spent a total of 7 years in post secondary schooling, learning about the American School Counseling Association's national model, learning what it means to be a counselor, and how incredibly important it is to support all students. When I became a licensed school counselor I agreed to follow ASCA's code of conduct. This code of conduct includes advocating for all of my students to have the right to be treated equally, fairly, and with dignity and respect. To advocate for all students to be free from discrimination and bullying. America is the home of the free, a place where we proudly stand for our constitutional rights, yet this law violates students' constitutional privacy

rights. Students have the constitutional right to be heard, seen, and supported at school. Students have the right to be themselves and students have the right to be protected from harassment and discrimination at school.

I believe no child should ever feel like their only option is suicide. To deny students the right to a gender affirming school setting, and the basic respect to call them by their proper name and pronouns, is to show them that you do not care about them. The Trevor Project's 2023 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People found that roughly half of transgender and nonbinary young people found their school to be gender-affirming, and those who did reported lower rates of attempted suicide (TheTrevorProject, 2023).

Another point I'd like to make is that gender is not a one or the other option, it is far more complex. When enrolling students will schools be expected to verify that each students genitalia match what is on their birth certificate? We certainly cannot determine gender or sex based off of how a person looks at any age. How can we protect students, minors, when we are suggesting grown adults inspect their genitals so they can attend school?

The given name act states in section 1B subsection 2, **that no employee of a school district or postsecondary educational institution, regardless of such employee's official duties, shall address a minor or student with a name other than the name listed on the minor's or student's birth certificate, or a derivative of such name, without the written permission of the minor's or student's parent.** This vague wording affects all students, not just gender non conforming ones and will impact any student that goes by a name other than their given name. Whether that is John, Sam, Jeff, or Robbie, no longer can any student be referred to as anything other than their given name. Now, I personally know many people named Robert or Jeffrey, Jonathan or Samantha, whose family and subsequently school officials, have

only called them by their nickname. This bill threatens all students' abilities to go by preferred names. Now, there is a caveat though, **“with written permission from the minor’s parent.”** Does this mean gender non conforming students who have supportive families can continue being referred to by the proper pronouns and name, rather than what is on their birth certificate? Or will this caveat only apply to the John’s, Sam’s, Robbie’s, and Jeff’s of the world?

Thank you again for your time and I encourage you to please, put students first. Protect students' mental health and their constitutional rights to a fair and equal education. Denying students a safe space creates an environment where statistically students are more likely to take their own lives.

**Tiffany DeMoss**

**She/Her/Hers**

Kerstin Deppe  
krdeppe@gmail.com  
Private citizen  
2/10/2025

## Opponent

Chairman Erickson 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 Kerstin Deppe and I am a voter in Lenexa, Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

My daughter has known her true identity since was in 5th grade. Halfway through middle school, with my support, she asked her teachers if they would refer to her by a different name. They did, and in no way did it effect their ability to provide quality education.

As she entered high school, she had the a opportunity to officially change her name as an enrolled student via a simple form our district provides. Teachers were supportive, and, in their own words, it did not negatively effect their ability to provide quality education.

I ask you: how is the name change scenario above different from a "straight" student asking teachers to refer to them by their middle name because that is what their parents and nuclear family have called them since birth? That was the case for me growing up as a "straight" person, and is still the case for me today. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to align my identity in school with the identity I had outside of school.

Respectfully, the difference is clear to me - and to the children - that it boils down to prejudice.

My daughter is now a junior heading toward college, a track I fear she may not have chosen had she not been in an environment conducive to building self-confidence and supporting authenticity. . As you surely can remember, teenage years are hard enough without the added pressure to conform. Mental health is as important a factor in childrens' ability to learn as having enough food and sleep is.

Giving the government power to regulate how people live their personal lives is going way too far. Respectfully, parents know their children and their mental health. The government doesn't. Deciding what actions parents are allowed or not allowed to take to support their childrens' mental health is not the government's job.

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

Opponent Testimony to SB 76 – Written Only  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Dominick DeRosa  
Teacher, President of NEA-KCK

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 76.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 76. I have been teaching in a public high school since 1998, and throughout my career—as both an educator and former student—it has always been common practice to use a student’s preferred name in school activities.

This bill would force educators to use only the name and pronouns listed on a student’s birth certificate, regardless of their personal identity. It also authorizes legal action against educators who do otherwise. If passed, this bill would not only limit the ability of teachers to support their students but would also cause undue and lasting trauma.

Let me share a real example from my experience: I had a student who chose not to go by his birth name. No explanation was given at the time, and I respected his request. However, when speaking with his father, I referred to the student’s preferred name, which enraged the father. Only years later—after the student graduated and left home—did I learn the full story. His father was abusive, and the name itself was a painful reminder of that trauma. At school, using his preferred name gave him a small sense of relief from a situation he couldn’t yet escape. Had this bill been in place, my colleagues and I would have been legally required to retraumatize him every day.

Another student came to me asking to be called by a different name. Later, they asked if their school laptop could reflect their identity. I made a simple call to the tech department, and the change was made. Later that day, I saw them in tears—not from sadness, but from joy. They told me, *“The school and staff recognizing it made it so I didn’t have to worry about my peers jabbing at my name or me. My family wasn’t supportive of who I was, but the small recognition I got at school helped me gain the confidence I needed to do what was best for me.”*

Schools must be safe places where students can learn and grow into independent young adults. A University of Pittsburgh study found that trans girls are **six times more likely to consider suicide** than cisgender girls—but small actions, like respecting a student’s chosen name and pronouns, significantly reduce this risk.

This bill does nothing to protect students. Instead, it enacts **harmful, unjust, and unchristian** restrictions that will negatively impact students’ emotional and social well-being. As educators, our job is to provide a supportive and inclusive environment—not one that isolates, shames, or endangers the children entrusted to our care.

I urge you to **oppose Senate Bill 76** and stand with the students who depend on us to ensure their safety, dignity, and right to a positive school experience.

Sincerely,

Dominick DeRosa  
913-620-2706

Opponent Testimony of SB 76

For the Senate Education Committee

February 10, 2025

Matt Dickey

Private Citizen

Chair Eirickson and Members of the Committee,

I am writing today to provide opponent testimony against Senate Bill 76. This bill is clear government overreach. For Senators Argabright, Pettey, Rose, Shane, and Starnes, imagine in your youth needing to get written permission for you to be called Mike, Pat, TJ, Doug, and Brad. Imagine being at a post-secondary level and still not having the autonomy to be called what you want. For those senators on the committee who do go by the name on their birth certificate, try to imagine having the threat of legal action against you for using your colleagues chosen name.

It is beyond a waste of the people of Kansas's money and resources being spent on something so benign. Imagine being a pro-deregulation, small government advocate thinking the state needs to be involved in what people call themselves.

Thank you for your consideration

Matt Dickey

Private Citizen

Dear Senator Erickson and Educational Board Committee,

I am writing to you in regards to bill SB 76 which I find highly disrespectful to the future Kansas leaders of tomorrow, as well as Kansas Educators and Children of today. The women in my family have been teaching Kansan Children for over 100 years after getting college level degrees, from one room school houses with hand written textbooks of the 1920's to present day and hopefully continuing with the next generation. But if we continue to police our Educators and waste the Kansan tax payers resources on bills that create hate and division in our communities, the future of Kansas will indeed be bleak. I find not addressing a child by the pronouns of their choosing & how the children are telling us they wish to be addressed because of their age as a blatant disrespect to the human being with feelings that they are. If we are only considering the government document listing sex for pronoun direction, should we also disrespect our children by only calling them by the name on their birth certificate? This policing of our Educators with Bill SB-76 for your own agenda will have a negative psychological effect on the next generation & our current teachers, where mental health & teacher shortages are already a pressing issue of our society. Bill SB-76 goes against Kansas families' & teachers who have supported & worked to improve and advance our Kansas Communities for generations like mine, & makes me reconsider my options of statehood for the next 50+ years after over 130 plus years of family lineage in our state. You have the opportunity to help set the national tone on Education, human rights, and simply just being a kind neighbor like the Bible teaches us. Like Progressive Kansas' before us with the 1958 Dockum Drugstore Sit-In in OUR home town of Wichita, Kansas & Brown Vs. Board of Education that helped end segregation in our communities, education system and nationwide. I hope Senator Erickson, the Educational Board of Committee, & the Republican party of Kansas as a whole are thinking of not only of the future of our next generations but of their future, because you have 18 years to convince these children that you are worthy of continuing a relationship with you as an adult and they WILL remember exactly how you told them they do not deserve a voice or deserve space in our Kansas moving forward.

Thank you,

Megan Dorrell

Douglas County Resident



Opposition Testimony For SB 76

For The Senate Education Committee

February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Lawrence J Downing

Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on SB 76.

I strongly oppose this heartless and cruel bill. As a retired National Board Certified Science Educator with thirty-four years of classroom experience in Kansas Middle and High Schools, I am appalled that such a bill would be considered. I am opposed to all the articles in it. This Bill SB 76 will result in the harassment and bullying of some of our most vulnerable students. It will undermine and remove teachers and schools' ability to protect students from bullying and harassment. Schools should be a safe place for all students including LGBTQ kids.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. Downing

Pittsburg, Kansas

Hello

I am submitting testimony in opposition to senate bill 76,

I am a teacher at Lawrence High School - I teach three levels of chemistry. I have been teaching in some capacity for ten years. One of the first and most obvious things you learn as a teacher is that student success inside and outside the classroom hinges on mutual respect with teachers

As a teacher, I will do everything I can to earn the trust and respect of those under me so that I can effectively help them craft a successful future. This mutual respect includes abiding by the social contract between teacher and student where politeness and respecting each others' wishes forms the foundation of understanding between pupil and authority. Each relationship between student and teacher is individual, and the decisions of naming and pronoun use should be left to each individual relationship.

This legislation flagrantly undermines a teachers ability to build that respect with students. This legislation comes at a time when education hangs so precariously in the balance, legislation prohibiting the speech of teachers is not at all where the focus should be and betrays a deep lack of care for students.

The timing of this legislation is also extremely suspect. I heard about this legislation 24 hours before the testimony was due. This to me shows a lack of interest in the opinions of the actual people it would affect and a damning indictment of how out of touch the individuals that put this bill together are. I strongly urge you to oppose SB 76.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Clara Duncan

Opposition Testimony for SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Mary Duncan

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on SB 76.

It is very important to me that this bill be stopped. Our current political climate in the United States is a very dangerous place for young trans people and students. It is important that students feel supported to learn and grow in an environment where they can feel like themselves. By mandating that parents consent to students using pronouns that are different than their birth certificate, you are mandating that in order for students to live and grow and explore who they are, they must “come out” to their potentially unsafe parents.

This will inevitably put children at risk in several ways. First, if a student wants to go by different pronouns, they could be forced to come out prematurely to their parents. If their parents are unsafe people to come out to, which is not unlikely in the current political climate, this will endanger the student’s mental and/or physical wellbeing. Second, if the student wants to go by different pronouns, and they cannot come out to their parents because they fear for their wellbeing, then the student will be forced to live as someone who is deeply uncomfortable in their own body. Data shows that young trans students who are forced to live in a way that is not in line with who they feel they are puts them at a much higher risk of suicide.

Not to mention, this legislation puts our educators aiming to support trans students at high risk of retribution, whether through losing their jobs or facing legal repercussions. The last thing we need in this climate is to attacking educators.

Thank you for listening to my testimony. I sincerely hope this bill is not passed.

Sincerely,  
Mary Duncan

Johnny Dunlap  
johnnydunlap2@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/10/2025

## Opponent

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Johnny Dunlap, and I am a voter in Ford County, specifically in Spearville. I am writing to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 76.

I write to oppose this hateful legislation. The bill contradicts itself by stating teachers and students do not check their rights at work, but then the bill proceeds to take away the 1st amendment rights of teachers and students. The bill begins with dishonesty and ends with hatred.

I oppose SB 76 because I am an educator. I am a teacher and a coach. Children who enter my classroom feel safe and free to express themselves. To do otherwise would violate the sacred trust I've gained by earning my Bachelor's degree, my Masters degree, and my Professional Teaching License. My students know that I will protect them from hatred like the hatred encased in this bigoted legislation. They know they can ask for my help with any problems they might have, school-related or not, and that I will do my best to help them or at least connect them with someone who can help them.

I oppose SB 76 because I am an educator who cares about the children I teach. I do not check my 1st amendment rights at the school building doors and will not take part in spreading hatred to children. I rebuke the legislators who would have me ignore my students' wishes in simple tasks such as using chosen names and pronouns that fit them. Not only is this in violation of basic decency, but it is, at best, a childish thing for the legislature to demand of me; it is, at worst, asking me to break trust. Further, it puts me in a position where I must choose between my teaching license, my very livelihood, and treating children with basic decency, dignity, and respect. This bill is shameful and bigoted.

Three days into my first year of teaching, a student who had no classes with me came into my classroom right after school and asked me if I would sponsor a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA). I indicated I would sponsor the club but had to ask, "What made you approach me about this? I don't have you in class, and I haven't told anyone about my political views or anything." The student said, "Well, you told everyone in your classes that we're on a tiny rock, hurtling through space, and we should treat others with kindness and respect, so I figured you'd be a good sponsor." It occurred to me that if all it took for this kid to choose me as their sponsor, kindness, and respect must be in short supply. I learned that day just how important it is to treat the children in our care with basic decency, compassion, and respect. I knew that fostering such in how students treat their peers is essential. Through sponsoring that club, I learned that LGBTQ kids are no different than their peers. They have all the same challenges and anxieties as any other high school kid, with the bonus of adults in power who will mistreat them. Adults like those who introduced this legislation. Adults in power who will encourage, or at least not intervene

when these kids are mistreated and bullied by other kids. Their bullies parrot what they hear from the adults in their lives.

The enforcement mechanism is ridiculous. People can sue teachers for insisting on basic decency and treating others with dignity and respect. We already do not pay teachers enough, so now you want them to be sued out of what little money they make because some legislator seeks to prove how much they hate trans kids? Brilliant.

It's hateful legislation like this that pushes good people out of teaching. Kansas is facing a teacher shortage. In the fall of 2024, public school teaching vacancies in Kansas were 1,954, up from 1,810 in the spring of 2024 and 1,628 in the fall of 2022. The district where I teach has about 20% of its teaching positions, more than 70, filled by long-term substitute teachers. Forcing teachers to violate the trust of their students will only exacerbate this problem. Violating the 1st Amendment rights of teachers so the hate-filled legislature can show everyone how hateful they are is pathetic.

Oppose this bill. Exercise basic human decency and intelligence to kill this bill in this committee. To do otherwise will only result in trans and non-binary children being targeted by the very people from whom they are supposed to learn because their teacher followed the law. To be ignored and abused by teachers they are supposed to be able to trust because some bigots in Topeka dictated they had to do so. It will teach other children it's ok to treat people terribly because they are "different" or "don't fit in."

Lastly, despite discriminatory legislation, my classroom will always be a safe and caring learning environment. I will always be a barrier between hateful people who write legislation like this and children. I, for one, will not sit idly by while those we've entrusted with leadership choose to abuse our children. Vote no on SB 76. Thank you.

Sheila Ebersole  
sheilaeaprn@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/6/2025

Supporters of this bill.

Chairman Erickson 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 NAME and I am a voter in YOUR COUNTY/CITY. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76. It is a disgusting way to push an agenda on children. All humans have a right to choose what they wish to be called. JD Vance, Donald J. Trump, Madonna, Bill Clinton, I myself choose publicly/social media to not use my "married name" as it was obtained by an abuser 24 years ago! Why would someone not allow another to use a preferred name in a setting where "legal name" doesn't matter? We have celebrities calling themselves different races when the "legal truth" is something different.

I grew up in Topeka, Ks. At the age of 12 I was bullied but people that chose to not accept the term lesbian. I did not identify as lesbian but my primary parent did. The whole school, parents in an uproar because my parent was a lesbian. It caused so much stress for me. Then it became acceptable for my parent to love who they loved. Were they born that way or was childhood trauma that no one protected them from the cause? One can argue either way. The fact is when it wasn't ok I was BULLIED by children, by adults by Fred Phelps himself at the age of 17. However once it was recognized and people accepted that you love who you love and no one chooses to go against the grain life became easier. I am now 50 years old and here I am defending something that truly doesn't affect anyone else but the person(s) that it does! It shouldn't be this way. We are put on this earth by God to love and not judge! We answer to Him in the end. What does it matter if to someone else if the other is wrong?

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

Friday, February 7, 2025

Dear Senator Erickson, and Committee on Education,

My name is Dr. Grey Endres. I am a 61 year old lifelong Kansan, as I was born in Wichita and currently live in Lenexa. I graduated from Kansas schools including 2 degrees from the University of Kansas. I have worked with traumatized and abused children since 1986. My purpose has been to protect, educate, and treat children and families who have been victimized by violence, abuse and trauma.

Senator Erickson, as a former principal, I suspect that my purpose and your purpose to protect and educate children are similar. Thus, I'm curious what is the purpose of Senate bill 76? If it is to protect children, then I am concerned that it will not be successful. Similar legislation to your bill in surrounding states has already demonstrated that it will not protect children, but it has an unintended consequence of targeting children. For example, Nex Benedict from Oklahoma was attacked and beaten in the school restroom, which led to their completion of suicide. Oklahoma's legislation did not protect Nex Benedict. I am concerned about sub point d (pg. 2) that "no student shall be subject to any disciplinary action for declining to address an individual using a name other than the name listed on the individual's birth certificate" will give way to bullying.

Is what a child calls themselves or their use of pronouns what keeps you up at night? What keeps me up at night is the failures of child welfare in Kansas, the child fatalities in Kansas, the increase in domestic violence in Kansas, and the deadly fentanyl dilemma in Kansas.

It is my recommendation that senate bill, 76 be allowed to die in committee. In addition I would challenge each of you to draft bills that address the failures of the child welfare system, domestic violence, increased gun violence, and the fentanyl overdose crisis rather than gender identity. When you do, I will gladly collaborate with you.

Thank you for your service to the great state of Kansas.

Sincerely,



Dr. Grey Endres DSW MSW LCSW LSCSW

Associate Professor & MSW Program Director Missouri Western State University

Lenexa, Kansas Resident

Kansas LSCSW #1830

Kansas Appleseed Strengthen Families Steering Committee member

NASW Peace & Justice Committee member

Daniel England  
daniels.spam.stuff@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

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 Daniel England and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

If this bill had passed while I had been in school, I would not have survived. I came out as transgender during high school. I used a different name and pronouns than what was recorded on my birth certificate at the time. And I did not have parental approval.

Almost every student I went to school with referred to me correctly, by the name and pronouns I chose, not by what was on my birth certificate. Every teacher I had referred to me correctly. No one was harmed by doing this. This support and recognition played a vital role in my mental health and my continuing education. I did incredibly well in school BECAUSE I had the support of teachers and students alike.

If teachers had been forced to refer to me by the wrong name and pronouns, it would have severely affected my education: I would be discouraged from participating in class for fear of being called on. I would have avoided asking for help or clarification on assignments. I would have skipped classes to avoid the stress of being deadnamed and misgendered constantly. I would not have participated in extra curricular activities.

Additionally, the combined transphobia from both home and school would have been such a detriment to my mental health, I would have been a very high suicide risk. I likely would not have survived high school.

Is this what you want for today's transgender students? Worse education, worse mental health, higher suicide rates, truancy.

Is this what you want for our schools and communities? Teachers who constantly fear litigation, students losing friends and classmates, families losing their children.

Trans kids and trans teens deserve better than this. They deserve being referred to by their names. They deserve being respected. They deserve a safe learning environment.

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



Kristen Epps  
kristenkim03@hotmail.com  
Private citizen  
2/6/2025

## Opponent

Thank you to the committee members for allowing me to testify in opposition to SB 76. My name is Kristen Epps and I am a voter from St. George, Pottawatomie County. I am asking the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

For me, respecting a person's choice of pronouns comes down to just that—respect. As a born-again Christian, I was taught from a young age to treat others as I wish to be treated, and to love ALL of God's children. Love and respect cannot be divorced from one another; these values are inextricably linked. You cannot love someone—love them fully—if you do not respect their personhood and identity. And isn't the gospel of Christ calling us to love?

Furthermore, as an educator, using preferred pronouns sets an example for the entire class, demonstrating that they will all be seen as a person with value, not as an "undesirable" or enemy. This empowers ALL young people—regardless of their gender identity—to feel a sense of belonging. True learning cannot happen in a space where students feel fearful or out of place. Parents, teachers, staff, and communities all want what's best for our young people. Let's work together to create a world where showing respect matters.

Thank you for listening to my concerns, and I ask that you vote NO on SB 76.

To: Senate Committee on Education

From: Michelle Y. Ewert

Hearing date: February 10, 2025

Re: Opposition to SB 76 (Requiring employees of school districts and postsecondary educational institutions to use the name and pronouns consistent with a student's biological sex and birth certificate)

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I write this honorable committee to express my opposition to SB 76. My perspective on this issue comes from both my personal and professional experience.

First, I am a licensed foster care provider in Kansas. I provide emergency and respite services for youth aged 10 to 18. Over the last few years, I have had multiple LGBTQ youth placed with me, including non-binary or transgender youth whose families had rejected them because of their gender identity. The pain these young people have experienced because of adults' unwillingness to acknowledge their gender identity is heartbreaking.

Professionally, I am an attorney. Over the years, I have represented transgender individuals in a range of cases, including young people wishing to legally change their name upon turning eighteen. For my transgender clients, the disconnect between the name on their legal documents and how they view themselves is a source of tremendous pain. The relief my clients feel when their legal documents are changed to match how they see themselves is profound. Names matter.

Lastly, I am a Christian. My faith calls me to love my neighbors as myself. I try to live this out by seeing the dignity in each person and treating them with respect. One simple way to do this is to use the name and pronoun that makes them most comfortable.

Adolescence is a challenging time for many young people. Figuring out who you are and how to live in the world is hard enough without being made to feel like who you are is somehow wrong. Using students' preferred names and pronouns in the classroom can go a long way to helping vulnerable young people experience dignity. I urge you not to vote SB 76 out of committee.

Olivia Favreau  
ocfavreau@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/10/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson 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 Olivia Favreau and I am a voter in Westwood I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76"

As a university staff member I am urging you to block this bill. It poses a threat to students freedom of expression and self actualization which are protected in the first amendment. A child's sense of self should not be legislated period but this bill also proves to be a logistical nightmare and witch hunt. As a university a staff member I would never know if a student would be a minor when addressing them by the name they've given me, nor would I even have the tools to check them in some portal, would I be sued by bad actors for having called them the name they gave me, where is Kansas getting the money for these lawsuits?

Beyond that there is the legal argument over if a name could be considered a derivative, where does one get the nickname Dick out of Richard.

I don't believe in big government legislating what a child can call themselves and this bill is just another waste of tax payer dollars to bully children because you need a political scape goat, how about putting in legislation that matters to Kansans. Especially in the face of a national administration that is about to strip the universities in this state of research funding because they mention the word "women". Yes while you are crafting these unconstitutional bills to try and pigeon hole students into specific genders real educators are trying to figure out how their research, that contributes to the health and economy of this state, can even happen. Trans people have never asked to be made political, they simply want to express themselves. This bill is government over reaching into our schools.

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

Date: 7 February 2025

Written Testimony in Opposition to SB76  
Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education

Thank you, senate members of the Committee on Education, for considering my Testimony in opposition to SB76 a.k.a. “the given name act”.

I didn’t go by my given name as a child, nor did my father or grandfather. We had preferred names. In general politeness, the people around us called us by those preferred names, including teachers. A name is a very personal thing. It met our needs to be called by names with which we are comfortable. It was a pursuit of happiness. It was for some of us a matter of affirming the importance of our life and liberty.

Freedom of speech is an important liberty that should apply to all people, including children. Freedom of speech though, does not mean that we are entitled to every platform to speak from. It doesn’t mean that I can speak without consequences. It doesn’t mean I can use my words to harm others. If I am an employee, it doesn’t mean I can speak however I want and avoid any disciplinary action by my employer. It does mean that I should not be compelled by the government to say something. I should not be persecuted for expressing an opinion that differs from the government.

SB76 would subordinate the free speech rights of children and teachers to the rights of a child’s parents or guardians. It would compel teachers to use their words to harm others. It would provide educators who want to use words to harm some children, a platform, a captive audience. It seeks to protect them from the consequences of doing that harm.

The clear intent of this bill is not to prevent use of preferred names for any child, but rather to protect and compel harmful speech to trans and intersex children. It violates the fundamental rights children, and the free speech rights of school employees. I strongly oppose it.

Stephen Figgins  
Lawrence KS

Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to SB 76. This bill would ban schools and colleges from using a trans student's self chosen name or pronouns without parental permission. Most college students are adults. They do not need parental permission to do anything.

This bill would put undue pressure on faculty and staff to determine which students have permission from their parents to use which names. In turn, this will deter folks from other states from applying to work here in Kansas. Why would you choose Kansas over another state that doesn't dictate how you can behave to this degree?

Additionally, this bill would encourage trans students (and allies) to leave the state for college or not to apply here from other states. You may not care about trans students directly, but this will affect enrollment.

The majority of your constituents do not want this much government involvement in our lives. Just let us all live. There are plenty of ways to improve education in Kansas – this isn't one of them.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Heather Fiore  
Private Citizen

Committee on Public Health and Welfare  
Feb 6th, 2025  
Senate Bill 76

Jay Flatland, Private Citizen  
Testimony in Opposition

Madame Chair Erickson and members of the Committee:

I live in Olathe Kansas with my wife and 4 kids, 2 of whom are transgender. I oppose this bill.

First off, students who harass my kids will wear this law like a badge. They will flagrantly play the "pronouns" card to get away with their harassment, and will recognize immediately that teachers are not allowed to stop them. Bullying is already a problem in schools, and this bill will enshrine transgender bullying as "Approved by Kansas".

Secondly, this bill will allow teachers to disrespect my kids. The vast majority of teachers will respect and love my kids, but a small minority will not. I will have to prepare my kids for the reality that while at school they will be harassed not only by other students, but also possibly *adults*.

Requiring written permission for using pronouns or alternate names is just silly. How many other interactions at school might demand written parental approval? This bill will just add yet more red tape for teachers doing their already difficult jobs.

Finally, this bill represents yet another shot fired in the politically motivated culture war that is dividing America. It is yet another bill that contains the subtext that "transgender people are bad". Transgender people are not a problem. People simply existing is not a problem. All people deserve respect and dignity.

Sincerely,

Jay Flatland

Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Miguel Flores  
Private Citizen

Members of the Committee,

I wish to stress the importance of language, safety, and dignity for marginalized members of our community.

I have worked with various vulnerable populations for more than a decade—I have worked with primary and secondary victims of domestic violence, children in the foster care system, and unhoused persons. Through my work in public libraries, domestic violence shelters, middle and high schools, and juvenile delinquent centers, I have seen firsthand the impact of speaking to people exactly as they are in the moment, as they see themselves.

I have fought for policy changes in the organizations I've been a part of because I know there is a tangible benefit to providing the option of name changes. I've advocated for trauma-informed language, taught on the dangers of domestic violence, and have led workshops against the harm of everyday sexism. This is not about personal belief; it is about loving our neighbors as many of us have been taught to do.

I have been asked by teenagers to call them by one name in private, and another in public, in fear that they would be emotionally or even physically harmed by the parents tasked with showing them love. I have worked with unhoused individuals who wish to go by different names because of the fear of being recognized by someone who harmed them on the street. I have worked with coworkers who go by different names in the workplace simply due to preference, or because they've been harassed by members of the public.

"Deadnaming," the act referred to when referring to someone as their name assigned at birth which they no longer use, can have multiple harmful implications that may not always be obvious to bystanders. Those who have been blessed with a loving home or safe community may not understand the very real danger that being dead-named can propose. This is not just a matter of convenience, but one of physical safety.

If nothing else, introducing a bill like this would endanger not only our own children, but the public servants dedicated to ensuring they are kept safe. To me this would create an unnecessary waste of resources, and would cause additional divides in both public spaces and homes that are unnecessary to introduce. Is this truly something we wish to dedicate money and time towards? We could be feeding children, not punishing their caretakers. Those who work in public settings already have a plethora of policies and structures they are expected to abide by in the service of their community without having to be fearful that simply saying an incorrect pronoun might place upon them legal consequences.

Before I conclude, I wish to speak about the difficulty (and strangeness) of placing this much emphasis on assigned pronouns, which could only come out of a language that is so rooted in biological determinism. This idea that one's sex comes with a pre-assigned gender, and thus specific social roles, is not only incorrect but willfully reckless. It is damaging not just to the marginalized, but to all.

Would we look back to history and tell women who wrote under male pseudonyms because they knew they could not be taken seriously otherwise that they must be punished for their audacity to be seen as full human beings? Would we tell non-English grandparents whose language has no gender that accidentally calling someone a "he/she" instead of one or the other was worthy of throwing them behind steel bars? Would you tell a white man in charge of a large company should be fired or worse just because they used their middle name instead of their first?

The ramifications are endless, and basing anything on this kind of logic is needlessly complex, unkind, and harmful to us as a nation. One need only look back to the 104 years of Suffragettes, or the recent Civil Rights Movement that has been ongoing since the 60s, to see how far we've fought to free ourselves of such limitations.

Public servants have an obligation to the communities they serve to ensure that each member is safe and cared for. As someone who has ever gone by their birth name, who has never cared what pronouns they were called so long as they were treated with respect, I ask you to make decisions directed by civic obligation and communal care. I have my own obligation to those I work with and love to value their human dignity above all else.

I thank you for your time.



Nina Fricke  
ninafricke9@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/6/2025

#### OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee bThank you for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Nina Fricke & I am a Kansas voter from Overland Park. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

This bill does not allow minors to use their preferred gender names which is a violation of their personal freedom & privacy. It also carries penalties for anyone wishing to respect a Minor's choice of gender name. As a nurse I know that medically there are variations along the gender spectrum & respect people who wish to make their own choice of pronouns. This, along with the too broads penalties described in the bill are government overreach by the legislature.

Once again, thank you for hearing my thoughts. I urge you to vote NO on b 67.

Danielle George  
dvoorhees24@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/25/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Danielle George and I am a voter in Spring Hill. I am writing today to encourage you to vote NO on SB 76.

This bill is not only overly broad but also infringes on personal rights. 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. Does this apply to shortened names like "John" instead of "Jonathan"? This is not a matter for politicians to decide, it is up to each student and their families.

In closing I thank you for hearing my opinion and again urge you to vote NO on SB 76. Thank you.

ALICIA GIBSON  
alicia.gibson721@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

OPPONENT

Dear Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Alicia and I am both a concerned citizen and a licensed psychologist who works with adolescents. I am writing in strong opposition to SB76, which would prohibit school staff from using a student's gender-affirming name and pronouns without parental consent. As someone with expertise in adolescent development and mental health, I am deeply troubled by the harm this bill would cause to vulnerable students and the undue burden it places on educators.

As a psychologist, I work with young people navigating critical periods of identity formation. Research and clinical experience show that affirming a student's gender identity is essential to their mental health, well-being, and academic success. Denying a student the right to be addressed by their chosen name and pronouns is not only cruel but also increases the risk of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation—concerns that are already disproportionately high among transgender youth.

Beyond the harm to students, SB76 places an impossible burden on teachers, counselors, and school staff. It demands that they prioritize compliance over creating a safe learning environment, while also exposing them to frivolous lawsuits from uninvolved third parties. The broad damages clause creates a climate of fear and confusion, discouraging professionals from doing what is ethically and psychologically sound for the students in their care.

I have seen firsthand how supportive environments can change the trajectory of a young person's life. Conversely, policies that invalidate their identity contribute to alienation, withdrawal, and disengagement from school, which have lasting impacts well beyond their school years. It is deeply concerning that SB76 would codify discrimination into law under the guise of free speech while ignoring the constitutional rights of students to privacy, self-expression, and equal protection.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to vote against SB76. This bill would create real harm for students and educators alike, while failing to address any legitimate educational concern. Instead of policies that further marginalize vulnerable youth, Kansas should be working toward inclusive and evidence-based solutions that support student well-being. Thank you for listening to my position.

Opposition Testimony for SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10th, 2025  
Maggie Gilmore

Chair Erickson and Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on SB 76.

As a taxpaying Kansan, I can't believe that the paid legislators of this great state think that a bill dictating whether a child can be called a name of their choice is actually being proposed when we have so many actual issues that need addressing.

One of the most disturbing aspects of this grossly unconstitutional bill is that it treats children as if they are not people at all. A child is a person with constitutional rights, not a puppet to be solely controlled by their parents or teachers and certainly not by their government. Does a child not have the right to decide what they wish to be called? Whose rights are we protecting with this bill if not the rights of the children? If you care more about the comfort level of adults who are choosing to put their own value systems above what will actually foster a safe and supportive environment for children to learn in then you certainly can't claim to care about Kansas kids.

Stop wasting our tax dollars with these embarrassing displays of your lack of basic human empathy and awareness of the world around you. Trans people have always existed and always will exist, in spite of hateful, small-minded people and governments.

Sincerely, Maggie Gilmore

Marek Kennedy Glass  
marekkglass@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for granting me the time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you. My name is Marek Glass and I am a voter in the Sedgwick County area. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 76.

This bill seeks to disregard the lives of transgender individuals in the states education system; consequently, by forcing all teachers and students into addressing every individual by their birth name and sex you effectively inform these individuals they do not exist.

Transgender individuals deserve the same protections as any other individual in the school system and we shouldn't be essentially creating state sponsored bullying. Section 1d states that even if a transgender individual received written permission that individuals would not be punished for ignoring it meaning Section 1b2 meaningless.

Frankly I don't even see what this bill will accomplish other than completing disregarding a minority group as people. It is a disgusting stretch to argue this bill is pro-freedom of speech while completely removing individuals rights to express themselves.

This bill is a reckless overstep of power in the state taking agency away from the educators and introducing rules that are extremely impractical to enforce while disregarding the rights of students in the system.

In conclusion, this is a serious overstep of power in the school system and ignoring a group of individuals right to exist, I encourage all of you to vote no of the passage of SB 76. Thank you.

# SB 76 – WRITTEN ONLY

RE: Opposition to SB 76.

Senate Education Committee  
Monday, February 10 of 2025  
Deacon Godsey  
Lead Pastor, Vintage Church

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 76.

As a Christian pastor, and the parent of a trans daughter, I speak from direct personal and professional experience when I say SB 76 will do nothing to materially protect the lives of non-trans youth and families, but will undoubtedly create a context for continued, ongoing harm to the mental, emotional, relational, and physical health of trans youth and their families.

More broadly, this bill would create undo strain on the lives and work of the educators who will be forced to operate in the environment this bill would create, and would remove local decision-making power from schools and school boards re: what is in the best interest of individual students. In addition, this legislation flies in the face of widely accepted best practices for an educator's relationship to their students, and in the face of research-based facts relevant to this discussion.

Finally, as a professor of World Religions – and other biblically-rooted college courses – I also wish to express my deep concern over the constitutional overreach of this type of legislation, the way it violates educators' free speech protections under the First Amendment, and the ongoing harm it would do to the overall civic discourse in our pluralistic society.

Respectfully submitted,

Deacon Godsey  
Lead Pastor, Vintage Church – Lawrence, KS

Amy schrumpf goode  
amyjsgoode21@gmail.com  
Private citizen  
2/7/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson 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 NAME and I am a voter in YOUR COUNTY/CITY. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

As a follower of Christ, it's important to me that we treat everyone kindly, don't discriminate and don't interfere with people's happiness. Not once the Jesus ever denounce homosexuality and that should be enough for all followers of Christ to leave these poor kids alone. They may be children, but they know how they feel and it's not my right to tell them otherwise. Research shows these kids have a much higher rate of mental health issues and suicide and taking away their rights to be themselves will only further harm them. I ask that you dont harm children and follow Jesus' example

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

Krista Gordon  
Kristag71@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/7/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson 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 Krista Gordon and I am a voter in Johnson County, Kansas. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76"

I oppose this bill because all people deserve the right to be called by their preferred name. Time spent legislating things like this can be better spent making a positive change for kids in school, instead of adding stress to children that are perhaps already facing mental health challenges. School should be a safe place for students and teachers and staff should be free to call a child by their preferred name out of respect for their personhood without fear of retribution. This should be obvious to anyone that has ever loved a child. In fact, writing a letter imploring that we respect a person's name is mind boggling to me.

I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 76. Thank you.





**Position:** Proponent, Senate Bill 76  
Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education  
February 10, 2025

Testimony of Catherine Gunsalus,  
Director of State Advocacy, Heritage Action for America

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony supporting Senate Bill 76 (SB 76), which requires school district employees to use names and pronouns consistent with students' biological sex and birth certificates unless otherwise directed by parents. My name is Catherine Gunsalus, and I represent Heritage Action for America, a national grassroots organization with two million conservative activists nationwide, including thousands of Kansans.

K–12 schools across the country, including those in deeply conservative areas, have started addressing children by names that are not theirs and using pronouns that differ from their sex—without their parents' knowledge or consent. Changing names and pronouns is the first step in the implementation of radical gender ideology, which eventually leads to life-altering drugs and irreversible medical experiments. SB 76 protects children in Kansas and ensures that parents are in charge of the decision-making when it comes to the upbringing and education of their kids. Not only does the bill strengthen parental rights, but it also includes protections against compelled speech for teachers and staff who value the freedom of their conscience. SB 76 ensures that referring to kids by their given name and biological sex is safe for students and school employees.

At least eight states have enacted legislation similar to SB 76. Kansas has the opportunity to lead by passing SB 76 and protecting parents, students, and school employees.

**Heritage Action supports SB 76, and we urge you to vote YES.**

Catherine Gunsalus  
Director of State Advocacy  
Heritage Action for America