

Kathy Kappes-Sum  
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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 Kathy Kappes-Sum and I am a voter in Shawnee. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

As a former teacher, it's important to me to show students respect for their thoughts and feelings. I had many students who wanted to be called something other than their legal name, including their middle name or a nickname. As someone who hates to be called by my full legal name, I get it.

Using a student's chosen name and pronouns is in keeping with that idea. It shows our students that we respect them by addressing them as they choose. Furthermore, using students' names and pronouns protects them from bullying and harassment from other students. We've had such a big push to end bullying, and SB 76 would create an opportunity for bullying.

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.

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

## **Opponent Testimony on SB 76**

For the Senate Education Committee

2/10/2025

Hanna Kemble

School Counselor

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit this written testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 76. As an educator and advocate for student well-being, I am deeply concerned about the negative impact this bill would have on Kansas students' safety, mental health, and academic success.

SB 76 would require school district and postsecondary employees to use only the name and pronouns corresponding to a student's biological sex as recorded on their birth certificate. This mandate directly contradicts established best practices in education and mental health, disregards the guidance of professional organizations, and places vulnerable students at greater risk.

### **Harm to Student Well-Being**

Forcing students to be addressed by names and pronouns inconsistent with their identity causes significant distress, particularly for transgender and nonbinary students. Research from organizations such as the Trevor Project and the American Academy of Pediatrics demonstrates that gender-affirming practices—including using a student's chosen name and pronouns—significantly reduce suicide risk and improve mental health outcomes. By contrast, rejection and forced misidentification have been linked to increased rates of anxiety, depression, and self-harm. Schools should be places of support and belonging, not harm.

### **Conflict with Best Educational Practices**

Major professional organizations, including the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), emphasize that affirming students' identities leads to better academic and social outcomes. Students who feel seen, valued, and respected are more engaged in learning, more likely to attend school, and more likely to develop positive relationships with peers and teachers. SB 76 undermines these principles and risks creating a hostile learning environment.

## **Legal and Ethical Concerns**

This bill also puts educators in an untenable position by requiring them to violate professional ethical standards and potentially federal protections against gender-based discrimination. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, which has been interpreted by courts and the U.S. Department of Education to include gender identity. By mandating that school employees refuse to recognize a student's identity, SB 76 may expose schools to legal challenges and conflicts with federal protections.

## **Undermining Local Control and Parental Rights**

Many school districts already have policies that support transgender students in collaboration with families and mental health professionals. SB 76 removes local decision-making authority and disregards the voices of parents who support their children's identities. Families, not state legislators, should determine what is best for their children in consultation with educators and medical professionals.

## **Conclusion**

SB 76 is a harmful, unnecessary, and legally questionable measure that would negatively impact students, undermine professional educational practices, and create conflicts for educators and schools. Rather than legislating exclusion, Kansas should focus on policies that foster respect, belonging, and academic success for all students. I urge the committee to oppose SB 76.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Hanna Kemble

School Counselor

**2/7/25**

Written Testimony to Senate Committee on Education

**NAME: Kate Kemper**

**TITLE:** Lawrence, KS Resident

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** katekemper13@gmail.com

**CITY:** Lawrence

**BILL NUMBER: SB 76**

**BILL DESCRIPTION:** 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 and authorizing a cause of action for violations therefor.

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

Dear committee members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to SB 76. This bill is harmful to students, unnecessarily burdensome to educators, and, in my opinion, attempting to create a solution to a problem that doesn't exist.

As a postsecondary educator, I have a responsibility to treat my students with basic decency and respect- this starts with referring to someone with their correct name and pronouns. How are educators supposed to create a supportive and productive learning environment for our students when we may not be allowed to refer to them using the names and pronouns they feel most comfortable with? It's cruel, unnecessary, and violates privacy and equal protection Americans deserve, regardless of their age and gender identity.

As authority figures in our classrooms and academic spaces, educators are role models for our students. Our inability to treat students with basic decency will create an unsafe learning environment and open the door to bullying, harassment, and worse.

This bill is also an administrative nightmare, especially for under-resourced and understaffed schools across the state. SB 76 will lead to additional burden for documentation and enforcement that many schools do not have the capacity to support. The lack of resources feels like a much more worthwhile problem to solve as opposed to a implementing a solution to a fabricated problem.

I trust that my representatives will do the right thing regarding this bill, and I ask that this committee also oppose SB 76 to preserve welcoming and effective educational environments across our state.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kate Kemper

Lylah M Keyes  
lylah.keyes@washburn.edu  
Private Citizen  
2/10/2025

## Opponent

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for taking the time to review my testimony today. My name is Lylah Keyes, and I am both a voter in the Shawnee County/Topeka area and an educator. I am writing today to urge the committee to vote no on SB 76.

I'm writing today to express my sincere concern for the actions proposed in Senate Bill 76 as both a student teacher and future full-time teacher in Kansas.

As an active educator and someone who works around high school students every day, I can tell you firsthand that the effects of this bill won't be felt by cis-gender students or teachers, but rather by trans and non-binary students who constantly live in fear of their rights to free speech, free expression, and privacy being taken away. This bill invokes the idea of free speech but with a fundamental misunderstanding of what this right means and how it's enforced. Free speech does not protect the right of any educator to intentionally misaddress their students or to take actions that would put their students down or at risk. And this does put students at risk. As teachers we take the wellbeing of our students very, very seriously; which is why this bill is extremely dangerous, especially in light of research from the Trevor project that tell us "LGB youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8.4 times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGB peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection.<sup>4</sup>" This bill specifically targets students who come from homes where they do face rejection or even abuse because of their identity, stating

"(1) Pronoun or title that is inconsistent with the biological sex of such

minor or student unless the employee has the written permission of such

minor's or student's parent; and

(2) 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 bill is school yard bullying plain and simple; picking on the kids who can't hit back to make inroads with conservative voters. As an educator I find this idea abhorrent. Trans and nonbinary students have the same right as anyone to a free and fair education, and constantly calling their identity into question causes an undo mental burden on them that is disruptive to their learning.

What isn't disruptive to anyone's learning, on the other hand, is addressing a student by any name, pronoun, or other identifier that they so choose.

All around our country trans students are becoming a scapegoat; politicians who want to claim they're doing a great deal for education will create a bill denying these students their first amendment rights. Well, I'm here to tell you that trans students are not a problem in our schools; they are a part of the social fabric of our student bodies, and their unique experiences bring a richness to the educational experience for all students. Above all, they are kids, and they should have the right to express their identity without fear of retribution on the part of their teacher or their school.

If the committee is sincerely interested in solving a problem in education they might ask themselves why I, as a student teacher who works 40 hours a week for no pay, must purchase my own classroom supplies.

I thank the Committee and Senator Erickson once again for hearing my testimony, and I urge you to protect the first amendment rights of transgender students by voting no on the passage of SB 76. Thank you.

Friday, February 7th, 2025

## Testimony in Opposition to SB 76

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 76 today. My name is Matt Kleinmann and I'm a voter from Wyandotte County. I am writing to explain why SB76 isn't just wrong—it's dangerous for our kids and communities.

Transgender and gender-nonconforming youth are not your political props. These are honor roll students, 4-H champions, and future nurses. Yet this bill treats their life experiences like problems to be erased. Research from Kaiser Permanente proves trans youth already face 3-13 times higher rates of anxiety and depression than their peers. SB76 pours gasoline on that fire.

While you have your underlying motivations, federal courts have determined that gender-diverse students have the same fundamental rights afforded to all students, which cannot be denied based on gender identity, including:

1. The right not to be disciplined or treated differently because they are transgender or gender nonconforming;
2. The right to be treated with respect and not be harassed or bullied. Educational institutions must prevent and remedy unlawful sexual harassment, including harassment based on gender identity.
3. The right to equal educational opportunities, including using locker rooms and restrooms consistent with a student's gender identity and participating equally in athletic or extracurricular activities and school events. In most circumstances, students do not need to provide medical documentation of a gender transition to have access.
4. The right not to be compelled to provide personal and medical information to school officials. Similarly, school officials must not disclose personal information about a transgender student — including the student's sex at birth, medical history, gender identity, or gender transition — without the student's or their parent's consent.
5. The right to transition at school includes expressing their gender identity through how they dress and their preferred name and pronouns.

Thirteen states currently protect trans students in schools without chaos—why can't Kansas? We all know that our schools are stretched thin. SB76 would force teachers to play "birth certificate cops" while precious time educating our classrooms is wasted. Consider that 59% of nonbinary Kansans report being misgendered daily. How many lawsuits will that spark under SB76's "any bystander can sue" clause? Schools would need to track birth certificates for every student—a privacy nightmare and logistical impossibility. SB76 represents a massive government overreach and bloat. Many school districts already use preferred names without

legal docs. SB76 guts their successful policies. This isn't about protecting kids—it's bankrupting schools.

When we force teachers to deadname kids, we also defy the American Medical Association, which affirms that gender-affirming care saves lives. SB76 will threaten the life of every transgender kid in Kansas. We also ignore that 32% of trans people face violence when their IDs don't match their identity. SB76 invites violence against transgender youth.

If we are to be a state that "Loves Thy Neighbor," as we affirm when we say we are "One Nation Under God," then let's do that. What a fair and just Kansas Legislature would propose is that schools follow NASSP guidelines to train teachers on LGBTQ+ inclusion, that we adopt GLSEN's model policies allowing name/gender changes without court orders, and that we protect ALL students under existing anti-bullying laws. Voting to allow only transgender youth to be bullied does not protect children; It makes you the bully.

I will close with a reminder of our shared values. Many of us were raised on the teachings of Jesus, who spoke of accepting those that society often cast aside. In Matthew 19:12, Jesus explicitly mentions eunuchs—individuals who didn't fit the gender norms of the time—saying we should accept them. He taught us to embrace those different from us, not legislate against them.

This wisdom isn't just found in Christianity. As Kansans, our tradition is to help folks weather tough times together. It's our spirit of neighborliness. SB76 goes against the core of who we are as Kansans and human beings.

So I ask you today: What kind of Kansas do we want to be? One that turns away from our most vulnerable youth or one that lives up to our highest ideals of acceptance and compassion?

Let's be the Kansas that chooses love over fear, understanding over ignorance. Let's be the Kansas where every child—no matter how they identify—can grow up feeling valued and supported. Vote no on SB76, and let's work together to create schools where all our kids can thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Matt Kleinmann  
Wyandotte County, Kansas



Lucy Kline  
lucykline28@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to write to the committee. My name is Lucy Kline and I am a transgender woman living in Wichita, KS. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

This bill is a ridiculous attempt to curtail the first amendment rights of those working in educational institutions and the students who attend them. The damages section would create a tremendous chilling-effect that would effectively erase the existence of transgender people in education.

"Don't say Trans" bills like this are fascist and anti-American in their goals. It pushes a cruel, discriminatory ideology and suppresses transgender citizens.

Thank you for hearing my thoughts. Stop this needless assault on transgender people and our freedoms. Vote no on the passage of SB 76.

Amber Kovac  
amkovac80@gmail.com  
private citizen, Para  
2/6/2025

Opponent

Thank you for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Amber Kovac and I am a voter in Kansas City Kansas. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB76

As someone who works in a high school and has children in high school and junior high this topic affects me directly. SB76 ignores best mental health practices, violates student privacy and puts students in danger. Supportive adults are the biggest factor to helping any student achieve success. Using the names they ask us to use is an easy way to show a student that we support them. Adolescents are going through many changes and working hard to find who they are. Letting them express this in a safe environment is paramount to their mental health. Relying on every school employee knowing what is on a student's birth certificate is an unenforceable expectation. Letting anyone who overhears the "wrong" name or pronoun sue only serves to tie up courts and farther burden teachers.

Thank you for hearing what I have to say. I hope you can see how this bill will negatively effect students and teachers across this state. Please vote no on SB76.

HOLDEN KRAUS  
holdenkraus@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 Holden Kraus and I am an educator in Kansas City, Kansas. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76"

Over the last 13 years, I have taught mathematics in three different Kansas school districts working with more than 1,000 students in that time. In every school and every classroom, there is a child sitting in a desk or at a table trying to learn like most other students. This child wants to be safe, comfortable, and included in their school environments. This student wants to be seen and heard and appreciated. But this student experiences something that not many others experience. You see, they have a name and a gender expression that doesn't match what others expect. They show tremendous courage to show up as their true self in every moment of every day. They face increased amounts of bullying by adults and peers for their perceived or realized gender expression and identity when compared to their cisgender peers.

35% of LGBTQ students in Kansas that participated in GLSEN's 2021 National School Climate Survey reported being prevented from using their pronouns and names while at school. Think about your name and how important it may be to you. Maybe it's a family name shared by your ancestors. Maybe it's a nickname that that one special aunt gave you growing up that really connects with your soul. Think about how many times you have gone by that name without realizing how much it means to you. Now, if you would please, imagine that I know your name and work with you daily. I know your name and I choose to use a completely different name every single time I refer to you. What are you feeling? Anger? Sadness? Confusion? Are you reacting in the moment? Let's say that you politely speak up and advocate for yourself asking me to use your name and I am dismissive or get angry in return. Do you continue to speak up? Do you feel valued? Or do you feel like you don't matter? That the experience would be better if you weren't involved?

As a society, we frequently accept the use of nicknames in public spaces without question. A student named Christopher might ask to go by "Chris" and there's no harm considered in that. Students who haven't yet realized the power in their first names might choose to go by a middle name. We don't blink an eye - we adjust. Names are individual and meaningful and all our trans and nonbinary students are asking is to be seen and heard and appreciated. They want to be referred to by others using the name that connects with their soul. What harm does it cause to recognize a child's individuality by using a name that represents them or in referring to the student using the pronouns that best align with who they are?

Melissa Krebs  
mjkrebs24@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/6/2025

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 Melissa Krebs and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I respectfully ask you to oppose this bill as it violates trans students' rights in a place that should be a safe place for them. As a former public school teacher in the state of Kansas, I encouraged a classroom of respect, acceptance, and diversity. Schools should be a safe place for all students to learn without hindrance. When teachers and staff misgender a student or refuse to use their preferred name, it opens the door for the student's peers to do that same, and can potentially create a hostile environment that is not conducive to learning. Schools have a legal responsibility to respect all students' preferred gender markings, even before they are legally able to update their names or gender markings. Denying students this right might constitute a violation of Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution. Courts across the country have found refusing to use a person's gender-affirming name to be a violation of the Equal Protection Clause and gender-based harassment. Furthermore, the enforceability of this bill could create excessive administrative burdens on our local schools and higher institutions and could potentially be costly if those institutions have to defend their employees against frivolous lawsuits. Please, stop politicizing our learning institutions and let teachers do what they are supposed to do -educate.

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

Alysun Lauck  
alysunlauck@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Alysun Lauck and I'm a voter in Saline County. I am writing today to urge you to vote "No" in SB 76.

As a parent of young children, I have witnessed that some children preferred to be called a nickname or some other preference. I, myself, go by a nickname that does not match my birth certificate. I feel that we can extend that same rule to pronouns. I have never seen any firsthand account of a pronoun preference interfering with the learning process. This passage would ultimately undermine educators jobs as well.

I am hopeful that we can respect families if they're working through (privately with their children) with gender dysphoria with medical professionals. I don't believe that a simple pronoun preference should be discontinued because of not matching with their birth certificate.

I want my children to grow up in an inclusive society and I'm hopeful that that can still be achieved.

Again, thank you for hearing my thoughts. I encourage you to vote no on the passage of SB 76.

Opposition Written Only Testimony – SB 76

For the Senate Education Committee

February 10, 2025

Jacqueline Lightcap, Topeka

Private Citizen and Parent

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

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

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

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

Jacqueline Lightcap

Topeka

Joel Linhardt  
joel.linhardt@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 Joel and I am a voter in Olathe in Johnson county. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

Our county is founded on freedom. To take away a person right to be addressed properly is in direct conflict with freedom. Let's continue to be a county based on freedom, and continue moving forward, instead of taking steps back by mistreating other humans. We are better than this, and need to behave better than this. We are all created equal.

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.

JESI LIPP  
jesilipp@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Chair Erickson and Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Jesi Lipp and I am a voter in Wyandotte County. I am writing to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I was in elementary school in the late 90s and early 2000s, which means I was in classrooms full of Jessicas, of which I was one. Around fifth grade, I started getting sick of having the same name of everyone else and started going by Jessy. I honestly don't remember if I had my mom's permission the first time I asked to go by that at school. I know I didn't have my dad's - he didn't like nicknames. But when it became clear how much more I preferred Jessy, he was fine with it. There was nothing wrong with me wanting to try it out at school and see how I like it before bringing it up to him. I don't know if JD had permission when he stopped going by John, or if TJ did when he stopped going by Tyler. But figuring out names and identity is part of growing up. We should be allowed to experiment with what we want to be called.

I know I didn't have my mom's permission (my dad was deceased by this point) in junior year when I started spelling it Jesi instead of Jessy. But there's a reason I've stuck with that spelling for almost 20 years at this point. It's my name.

In middle school and high school, I had teachers call me Adriana and Rina because that was my name in Spanish class. In fact, I just ran into my old Spanish teacher last week, and she did not even remember my given name, because she knew me entirely as Rina. My theatre teacher called me Dictionary because that was the call sign the other kids called me by on the backstage radios. My sister's softball coach called her Stretch because, well, it fit. These were all a normal part of my and everyone else's school experience, and it's ridiculous to try to ban teachers from using anything but a student's given name.

Thank you again for listening to my thoughts on this bill. I strongly encourage you to vote no on SB 76. Thank you.



Opposition Testimony for SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 7, 2025  
Emmaline Lorenzo

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmaline Lorenzo

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Clarice Malkovich, I am a constituent and I am against SB 76.

Transgender individuals are human and are in desperate need of compassion.

I also believe that this bill goes against personal liberties of students, teachers, and others involved. Even calling someone a nickname or by their middle name would now be outlawed.

Not only Transgender individuals have chosen names. My legal name is Clarice and I am cisgender, but I often go by Claire, as I feel the name more suits my personality and is easier to say. If SB 76 was to be introduced, it would now be illegal for those to call me by my chosen nickname. My parents also call me Claire, but they would not see the point in filling out paperwork to give people permission to do so. Instead they would say, "Its someone's personal choice and respect for you on if they want to do so."

Why should the government get a say in what MY name is?

If the simple liberty of a name is taken away, what comes next?

Signed,

Clarice Malkovich  
Constituent of Senate District 21

Joy N. Mapes, LMSW  
joywriter8@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Joy N. Mapes, and I am a voter in Lawrence, Kansas. I have lived in Kansas my entire life -- Gardner, Leavenworth, Baldwin City, Lawrence, Merriam, Fort Scott, and Lawrence again. I am a licensed master of social work; I earned my MSW at Washburn University in Topeka. I am currently a school social worker. I am writing today to implore the committee to vote No on SB 76.

Yesterday, in my role as a school social worker, I was writing a social-emotion goal for a student's individualized education program (IEP). As I reviewed Kansas State Department of Education's Social-Emotional Character Development (SECD) Standards to ensure that the IEP goal aligns with the state's requirements for public schools, I noticed these learning goals listed under the Social Awareness heading for grades 9 through 12: "Practice strategies to increase acceptance of others." "Evaluate how advocacy for the rights of others contributes to the common good." "Challenge personal perspective with cognitive dissonance to enhance a growth mindset." "Evaluate how the unique contributions of underrepresented individuals and groups are related to respect for human dignity."

These goals were included in KSDE's most recent revision of SECD standards, which had undergone revision to address concerns including bullying and youth suicide and to align the standards with "research and best practices." My questions for you: Is SB 76 true to the standards we set for students? Will SB 76 help educators reach KSDE's goal for social-emotional learning, that "Each student develops the social, emotional, and character competencies that promote learning and success in life," or the Kansas State Board Vision, that "Kansas leads the world in the success of each student."?

I urge you to consider that SB 76 is in direct opposition to these goals for our state, students, and educators. Instead of promoting "acceptance of others," "advocacy for the rights of others," a "growth mindset," or "the unique contributions of underrepresented individuals and groups," SB 76 tells educators that we are no longer allowed to accept students as they are. If SB 76 becomes law, and a student tells a teacher, principal, school counselor, or school social worker that they want to use a different name or pronouns, we are no longer allowed to accept and validate them by using that name or those pronouns. We would have to use their "legal" name and pronouns unless we get permission from a parent. Getting permission from a parent increases the time, energy, and funds educators have to spend on paperwork, and it could expose the student to retribution from a parent who never learned "acceptance of others."

If SB 76 becomes law, while educators wait for permission from parents to use the student's chosen name and pronouns, other students will get the message from their teachers, principal, school counselors and social workers that their peer's new identity is illegitimate. These students will likely follow these trusted adults' examples and calling their peer by their "legal" name and pronoun, essentially telling their peer, "I don't know who you are," "You don't know who you are," and "I don't care who you are." This is exactly the opposite of what different, vulnerable kids need to hear.

SB 76 is supposed to protect educators' right to free speech, but what if we want to call students by the names and pronouns they want to use? What if we want to accept and validate, welcome and include them unreservedly? Basically, what if we want to do what educators are supposed to do? Students have to feel comfortable and supported at school, or they will not learn. And students need to learn from educators' example that kids who are different are just as wanted, believed, trusted, accepted, and respected as everyone else.

SB 76 tells educators to undercut vulnerable students who were brave enough to speak up for themselves. It mandates institutionalized bullying. It is against my professional ethics as a social worker. It flies in the face of Kansas' own education standards.

May I suggest that you take another look at the behaviors we expect of high schoolers and consider whether your vote on SB 76 will show your own social-emotional and character development? "Practice strategies to increase acceptance of others." "Evaluate how advocacy for the rights of others contributes to the common good." "Challenge personal perspective with cognitive dissonance to enhance a growth mindset." "Evaluate how the unique contributions of underrepresented individuals and groups are related to respect for human dignity."

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

**Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
Monday, February 10, 2025  
Larissa Maranell, private citizen**

Chair Erickson and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 76. I am a born Kansan, a veteran educator, and the mother of a non-binary child. It is because of this unique set of qualifications that I am writing to you today in strong opposition.

I grew up in Kansas public schools, my child attends Kansas public schools, and I teach at a Kansas public school. As a Kansas educator I have seen the immense power and the intense strife that comes from students who are members of the trans community based almost wholly on whether they have a person in their circle who acknowledges them as who they are. Regardless of whether you personally agree or disagree with the way they present themselves to the world, the simple truth is that you hold in your hands the capacity to save children's lives by opposing this legislation.

The NIH identifies that children can develop gender dysphoria as early as 3 years old. It also identifies that the correct course of action includes not an encouragement to persist, but an acceptance for what they are at the present time. The ability of children with hostile home environments to be able to find even one adult who affirms them as the unique human they are can literally extend their life. This coupled with the extremely small percentage of children who reassess their identity - NIH identifies that number is 1.4-3.5% - means that as the NIH so eloquently states, "This literature suggests the need for transgender youth to be cared for in a manner that affirms their gender identities". In fact they state "In all published cases, the majority has reported benefit from the interventions and an absence of significant harm." (Transgender children and young people: how the evidence can point the way forward, Philip Graham, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10063975/>)

In addition to the lack of adverse effects and strong positive effects of general acknowledgement of who a child is, the NIH also identifies the unique importance of acknowledgement at school. Trans and non binary students are identified as being at higher risk of victimization, higher risk of bullying, lower self-esteem and lower school grades and decreased sense of safety. They [trans and non binary students] are less likely to feel supported by an adult at school, which adds to their increased risk of absenteeism and dropping out. The reality is at base-line studies suggest that non-inclusivity of gender diversity is anchored in school culture and cisnormativity is the norm. What you are acting to do is restrict the few folks who are trying to support students and save lives by allowing kids who cannot find support elsewhere. ('School Factors Strongly Impact Transgender and Non-Binary Youths' Well-Being', Janie Kelley, Annie Pullen Sansfaçon, Morgane A Gelly, Lyne Chiniara, Nicholas Chadi, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9599998/>)

I have the pleasure of having taught a few students who have begun legal careers or are currently in law school and they had some additional thoughts on this topic which I would like to include as well. They are as follows

These logical conclusions I warn the Committee of regarding specific wording hereafter shall be denoted as “Article I” whose components will be labels as “1XX.”

#### **Article I – Specific Wording of SB 76**

##### **101 – Standing for Arguments Herein**

It is important to state that I retain no formal legal education, have no formal legal consultation nor claim that any of these statements constitute legal advice. I have compiled a number of concerns for the wording of the bill as it implicates the Federal Rules of Evidence, civil procedures for trying cases, and ambiguity arising from SB 76 that warrants review. It is with this foreword that I approach my testimony from the perspective of the Committee: the law.

##### **102 – “Employee” Definition**

The term “employee” presumes a working contract with some entity as part of a school district or postsecondary educational institution. The concern with this is that many students are employed by postsecondary educational institutions and blurs the line of “student” and “employee” as part of this bill: how is an employed student ought to be governed? Can the employed student legally seek injunctive relief from themselves at the cost of the state?

*Comment: Student roles employed by a university include but not limited to: cooking, teaching assistants, research, tutoring (for the university and adjacent school districts), event organizing, student legal services, and similar roles.*

##### **103 – “Harmed” as Written**

The term “harmed” as used in SB 76 is only used in reference to some anomalous repercussions from violating Section 1. The logical ramifications are twofold:

- 1) Determining the bar for “harmed” is done by legal parties hired by the plaintiff in pursuit of relief. The trier of fact in the proceeding case must determine said bar and if the brightline for a SLAPP suit has been met. Such deliberation threatens to absorb Kansas legal systems as the use of a pronoun or name inconsistent with a birth certificate (e.g. a nickname) would qualify as freedom of speech or the administration of an opinion or idea that does not incite violence; and
- 2) Calls for inadmissible evidence for the trier of fact to determine a civil suit. The use of pronouns and names out of court to assert the pronouns and names stated qualify as hearsay. The concern with 102(2) is precedent: opening the door for inadmissible evidence in court threatens to undermine the Federal Rules of Evidence that governs legal proceedings as they appear in trial. It is the responsibility of the Committee to consider how such laws will be enforced and interpreted by the courts.

##### **104 – “Derivative of such name” as Written**

A similar argument exists for 104 as for 103(1) where the bar for a “derivative of such name” is obscure. Such a bar—while good for the Committee to leave to the jurisdiction

of the courts—opens the door for increased litigation over names similar yet fail to meet a bar for being a derivative. Given the names “Abigail” and “Abi,” a derivative can be seen by a reasonable party. However, names arising from specific experiences or personalities are less clear. Nicknames derived from personality or similar characteristics such “Tiger” for any minor opens the door for injunctive relief to be administered at a name administered as an opinion or idea concerning the minor’s character (i.e. freedom of speech).

### **105 – Qualifications for being “Inconsistent with Biological Sex”**

One of the elements plaintiff parties must prove for a defendant to have violated SB 76 is that a pronoun or title used “[inconsistently] with the individual’s biological sex.” The burden for a civil trial is low but requires inadmissible evidence by speculating into the mindset of the declarant if a pronoun or title was used inconsistently with names that blur conventional sex-based names or gender-neutral names. One example would be “Sammuel” and “Sam” where “Sam” is a common name used by male and female sexes and is neutral. The implication comes from using “Sam” instead of “Samuel” and requires the plaintiff to prove the defendant used the derivative name with the intent of being inconsistent with the individual’s biological sex.

The concern for inadmissible evidence as mentioned in 105 is similar to that of 103(2) except regarding speculative evidence instead of hearsay. Speculation is inadmissible according to the Federal Rules of Evidence in trial. Plaintiff burden requires an intent to use words in violation with this bill that they must speculate as to the defendant’s mindset, motive, and intentions.

My logical conclusions I warn the Committee of regarding constitutional rights and Kansas Supreme Court decisions hereafter shall be denoted as “Article II” whose components will be labels as “2XX.”

## **Article II – Constitutional Concerns**

### **201 – Standing for Arguments Herein**

It is important to state that no cases have been decided with original jurisdiction over the roles of pronouns in the First Amendment; however, a number of cases are cited in this article to provide some foundation for what history can teach us about the law. It is with that foundation that Article II will be limited to instances in the state of Kansas, United States, and of historical rulings decided by the Supreme Court of the United States.

### **202 – Pronouns and Names Compared with First Amendment Exceptions**

A primary focus of the Committee is freedom of speech and expression at work, which is not in dispute. The concern is that SB 76 fundamentally contradicts the foundations the bill claims to maintain.

Freedom of speech requires the production of opinions and ideas be protected unless in violation with safety and security (*Brandenburg v. Ohio*, 395 US 444 (1969); *United States v. O’Brien*, 391 US 367 (1968)). This is the same reason it is illegal to shout “fire” in a crowded theatre as it is a threat and/or causes violence. It is worth noting the exceptions to the first amendment are few and narrow.

Senate Bill 76 threatens to exclude statements of protected speech and to liken innocent

speech as that of threatening to harm another. The use of a name or pronoun inconsistent with an individual's biological sex found to be punishable by civil suit likens the act to that of violence. Not only is this a dangerous law when considering the additional stress of making the simple use a name illegal, but a precedent concern as well. Establishing a precedent of such a wide berth as this opens the door to all forms of unwanted speech to be an exception to the First Amendment—as opposed to a few exceptions regarding physical and psychological safety while maintaining the freedoms promised to us by the Constitution.

At the absolute minimum, this bill should not be considered before first clarifying any and all language used in it to prevent basic legal problems—let alone the nuances from making such a bill law.

### **203 – Legal Provision for Broadness**

The broad language of the bill is not only a problem for enforcement, but also constitutionality under the First Amendment. As ruled by the Kansas Supreme Court in *City of Wichita, Kansas v. Gabrielle Griffie* (2024) (No. 124,412), a substantial overbreadth doctrine is unconstitutional. In that case, the Wichita Municipal Code of Ordinances criminalized “noisy conduct tending to reasonably arouse alarm, anger or resentment.” Such an ordinance was unconstitutional as a number of protected instances of free speech would be criminalized.

A similar situation rests before this Committee where the use of names and/or pronouns inconsistent with an individual's biological sex is overly broad as detailed in Article I and would include protected instances of speech that don't reasonably threaten physical or psychological violence.

### **204 – Preexisting Rights Underlying Kansas Founding**

While Section 1 of the Kansas Constitution Bill of Rights provides “All men are possessed of equal and inalienable natural rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” there exist rights underlying those conventionally listed by the state. The means of obtaining such rights are protected under the Kansas Bill of Rights as ruled in *Hodes Nauser MDS v. Schmidt* (2019) (No. 114,153) by the Kansas Supreme Court are included pertaining to the right of personal autonomy and self-determination. The underlying logic of this case is particularly relevant to SB 76 where a number of rights predated the foundation of the Kansas State government and are of consideration according to the Kansas Supreme Court. Names and/or pronouns would necessarily be included in:

1. The pursuit of happiness as outlined by the state barring contradiction of safety and security. Simple acts as preferred identification or orientation are necessary to how one defines themselves and how they are comfortable in their own skin: that is the pursuit of happiness and ought to be valued no matter personal or national in scale;
2. The promise of liberty only requires the state to allow its citizenry to exercise their liberty in all forms: this includes how one chooses to identify. That liberty is afforded in other ways in the form of picking an occupation, picking a family name, picking a partner in marriage, picking an institution (educational or



otherwise), etc. Any instance of lawful participation involving a decision that impacts how one is defined is an exercise of liberty which includes names and/or pronouns; and

3. The right to exercise self-determination as ruled in *Hodes Nauser MDS v. Schmidt* (2019). The case is in fact about the legality of prohibiting the Dilation and Evacuation abortion method but clarifies that the ability for a woman to make decisions of their body, health, family formation, and family life are included in the limited category of the right of personal autonomy. That autonomy goes hand in hand with 204(1) and 204(2) and it is important to remember the history SB 76 disputes. The right of personal autonomy is one that allows everyone in education to choose how they participate in the United States, how I am afforded the resources to choose my education pathway, how you—member of the Committee—can be here today and decide important matters to all students in Kansas.

### **205 – Role of Parents/Guardians in the Rights of Minors**

No part of 205 contests that parents/guardians are important to the upbringing of children nor the legal role they retain over the minors they are authorized to act on behalf of. What is contested is the substantially broad role parents/guardians are afforded in a bill that concerns the rights of minors.

As ruled in *Levy v. Louisiana*, 391 US 68 (1968), minors are afforded the same protections under the law by the Equal Protections Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. These protections concern the right to privileges and immunities of any citizen and shan't be abridged. This is particularly relevant when considering the privilege afforded to employees in SB 76 that their constitutional rights are not shed at work but are functionally forfeited when a parent/guardian brings a case of an inconsistent names and/or pronouns.

The danger is in giving parents/guardians such jurisdiction over the role of the First and Fourteenth Amendments as described in SB 76. This contradiction must be clarified and a clear bright line must be established for how the state will proceed with cases such that constitutional rights are not abridged in specific instances of SB 76 but protected in others consistent with the Equal Protections Clause.

February 6, 2025  
Testimony to the Senate Education Committee

NAME: **Leslie D. Mark**

TITLE: **Kansas Citizen / Voter**

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

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

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

Dear Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

I recently wrote, Chair Erickson, on another bill you brought forward for a hearing and asked “What exactly is your vision for a future Kansas?” This particular piece of legislation reveals your dark heart more than the last and cements your reputation for shifting public attention away from education toward deeper division and rancor among Kansans.

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

What should we ask of our laws guiding pedagogic practice?

*1. Respect of Individual Identity*

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

*2. Engender Excellent Educational Environments*

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

3. *Consider Legal and Ethical Impact on Communities*

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

4. *Evidence Based Policy*

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

A new year, but the same tired, irresponsible and... now... debasing & repressive expression for Kansas.

VOTE NO on SB 76.



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

William Marmon  
huds.marm@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Hello Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me a moment of your time to express my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Hudson Marmon, and I am a recent high school graduate and voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 76.

My sophomore year of high school, I did marching band for the first time, and I was on the drum line. Before my sophomore year, I wrestled and ran track, and if you asked me what clique I fit into best, I would have told you I was an athlete or a jock, which is probably part of the reason that a teacher calling students by their preferred name rather than the name that was given to them at birth was new to me when I joined marching band. When I realized what was going on, I was a little confused, especially due to the fact that some of the students who went by a preferred name were people that I had known since elementary school. I'll admit that at first, I was skeptical and put off by this, there were only two or three students who went by a preferred name out of the 150 students in marching band, but it felt to me like those students were pretending by using a name that wasn't theirs.

Throughout the marching season, there were often lists that were posted in the band hall. These lists told students which bus they were assigned to for various football games or competitions, and what always stood out to me is that my band director would make an effort to use the preferred names of those two or three students on these lists. It was a small detail, but to me, it demonstrated my band director's commitment to his students and the compassion he had for their decisions.

My band director was not flamboyant, nor was he outwardly expressive of any political views he had. As a matter of fact, if you asked me to describe him, I would call him a typical 50-something year-old guy, and a grouchy one at that, so the fact that he was so willing to support these students, albeit, in a very simple way, inspired me to follow his example. Although at first I was hesitant, I began to make an effort to call the students who had preferred names by their preferred names. And what I realized was that it didn't take much effort at all, and it quickly became second nature to me.

What I didn't know at the time, and what I later learned, was that even before I was trying, I was using the preferred name and pronouns of one of my peers. That person was Noah, my section leader and captain of the drum line. Noah was a great example of what a leader should be, he was kind, compassionate, at times strict, he kept his ducks in a row, but the most impactful thing he did as a leader was make me feel included and welcomed, especially at a time when I was very uncertain about my skills as a drummer and my place on the drum line.

Having been in that program for three years and having been around many of those students for those three years, what I can tell you is that transgender students are just like everyone else. I hope this is obvious, but they have feelings, they have hobbies, they have things that they are passionate about, and just like everyone, they can make very valuable additions to a group. However, there is one major difference. From my experience, students who are transgender are people who are fighting, and have been fighting, an invisible battle for a long time. They are fighting to be themselves in a world that often doesn't understand or accept who they are, and because of that, they are a group of people that are already predisposed to being bullied, harassed, and ostracized within our schools.

I am a straight, cisgender man and I am testifying today because I believe that people like Noah should have the right to be themselves, and to be themselves without fear. Unfortunately, I know that in our world, that right is often times unrealistic; However, as adults, I believe it is our responsibility to make school a place where students can grow and become strong enough to fight their own battles. What Noah explained to me is that a lot of trans people, are "stealth," and what that means is by being able to use their preferred names and pronouns in school, they are largely able to fly under the bullying radar. I share my story today because I believe the last thing that we as human beings need to do is make policy that will target and beat down a group of youth who are already struggling. I believe that like Noah, every student should have the right to express themselves, with or without their parents' consent. And I believe that having compassion for these students doesn't make me any less of a person or any less of a man.

Once again, 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.

Anthony Marshall  
tonymarshall33@gmail.com  
Private Citizen, Educator  
2/7/2025

## OPPONENT

To those that are voting in favor of the SB 76 bill: I am Anthony Marshall, a K-12 art teacher in the NW KS rural town of Oberlin, KS. I am writing to encourage you to vote NO on SB 76.

I have previously written to the proposing committee asking for their clarifications regarding the bill, but I have received no response from them. It leads me to believe that even they have no idea what they are proposing.

This bill is written as if children are being ripped out of parents hands and being forced to get gender changing surgeries without their consent. Common sense allows you to know this is obviously not happening.

Pronouns are a basic part of speech, and many conservative people are outraged by the mere mention of the word "pronouns". You are intentionally creating the opportunity for teachers to taken to court simply by teaching basic grammar.

This bill perpetuates the idea that teachers/schools are indoctrinating children to become trans. This is the most ludicrous concept. If we had the ability to brainwash children, we would make them simply sit, remember a pencil, or say excuse me or please. As a teacher in a rural district, I can promise you it is still (to the joy of many) a deeply homophobic and trans hating area. They have already been brainwashed with the intentionally divisive speech of the right wing. Trying to teach basic human respect is very difficult, and that is without pushing any "radical" ideas.

There are parts of this bill that are intentionally open enough to interpret, that it empowers places to fully deny healthcare in any form, in its entirety, to anyone in the trans community. This is massive violation of basic human needs. It is a violation of basic human decency.

The trans community is a very, very small community. It is one that under constant attack by conservatives of all levels. They are not predators. They are not sick in the mind. They are also one of the most vulnerable communities, with extremely high suicide risks due to the way that our nation at large treats them. They are just people being people.

I have known a small handful of trans peoples with 2 being trans youth. They remain the kindest, most respectful, hard working people I have ever met. I cannot comprehend the strength they have to take on the journey. It is a very long and lonely journey. Yet, each one that has completed it has felt more alive and "at home" than any other point in their life.

If this is about budget cuts, consider not giving yourself a raise when that bill comes around. That should help balance the budget.

Finally, you have to see that this is a "Gateway" bill. If it passes, it opens up the doors to micromanage and deeply control other parts of every person's life. So many of you run on the platform of "smaller government" and this is absolutely not that.

Please see the bigger picture. They are a small but meaningful part of the greater tapestry that makes our world amazing. Please treat people like people. This shouldn't be so difficult. Please find a small piece of humanity inside yourself and think beyond your political campaign. While this bill is pure authoritarian absurdism, it will be devastating to real people. Please vote NO on SB 76. Thank you.

CASSIE MARTIN  
martincassie3@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for your time and consideration of this written testimony in opposition of SB 76. My name is Cassie Martin and I am a voter in Topeka, KS. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

Respectfully, I am a student at a post-secondary institution in the state of Kansas, and I am not okay with the implications of this bill for my fellow trans and non-binary classmates. I received my Associates degree from Johnson County Community College in May of 2022. Next, I was awarded my Bachelors of Social Work from Washburn University in May of 2024. I am currently enrolled in graduate school at Washburn University and my tuition for the semester was a little less than \$8,000. This includes tuition and book costs for 15 graduate credit hours during Spring 2025. Much of these dollars pay for my professors salaries. I have watched my professors enrich the lives of others as they support and respect different gender expressions. I can't imagine the harm this will inflict as legislators make their way into classrooms that I pay to be in. When I send Washburn a check, I do so with the knowledge that my professors will respect the way that myself and my peers identify. Please don't allow this blatant attack on our rights to pass.

Once again, thank you for hearing my thoughts on SB 76. Please vote NO. Thank you.



Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 7, 2025  
Jess Martin  
Private Citizen

Thank you to the Senate Education Committee for the chance to provide my opponent testimony against Senate Bill 76. My name is Jess Martin (legally known as Jessica Martin) and I'm currently a student in the state of Kansas. I'm testifying on how SB 76 will negatively affect myself and my peers and teachers as well as harm my ability to freely express myself as an adult.

As I understand it, if SB 76 is passed into law, school and college employees will be banned from using a student's chosen name/pronouns without said student's parents' permission. Due to the language used in the bill ("minors and students"), it seems that this law would be applicable in reference to adult students as well. I am an adult and should not require my parents' permission for anything regarding my personal life choices or how I present myself. If at my age I am trusted to vote and make my own legal decisions otherwise, then I see no logical reason why my parent's permission would be needed for simple changes in my social life such as what people call me from day to day. The only true reason I can see for passing this law is to communicate that a transgender student's rights are less than that of their peers. After all, this wouldn't apply to the use of nicknames like Beth for someone legally named Elizabeth, would it?

I consider it an overstep on the government's part to require it by law that my parents sign-off on any nicknames, new names, or pronouns that I may use in settings where it's otherwise not required to use only my legal identifiers.

Furthermore, I think it would be a waste of time and resources to try to enforce this bill were it to become a law. Educational institutions are already spread thin both on labor and funds in Kansas, and the last thing that's needed is another law dictating what faculty and students can and cannot say within school settings. I fail to see any true benefits to any parties besides saving some hurt feelings of parents who want to continue to have a say in what their childrens' (adult or not) lives look like in one of the remaining places where they do not already have complete control.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide my testimony on SB 76. I hope you will take what I've said to heart.

Do not pass SB 76 into law.

Opponent Testimony of SB 76- Written Only  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Kimberly Martin MEd, BSN, RN  
Elementary School Nurse in a Johnson County District

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

My name is Kimberly Martin and I am a public school nurse in a Johnson County district , and I am writing to testify in opposition to SB 76, which mandates that schools use students' names and pronouns as listed on their birth certificates. This bill is not only harmful to transgender and nonbinary students but also contradicts best practices in student health and well-being as outlined by the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) in their *LGBTQ+ Students: The Role of the School Nurse Position Statement*. I am a member of this professional organization, but this is my personal testimony, informed by their position statement and my transgender students.

The NASN affirms that respecting students' chosen names and pronouns is a critical component of creating a safe and supportive school environment. Research shows that transgender and nonbinary youth who are affirmed in their gender identity experience significantly lower rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide. Conversely, when schools force students to use names and pronouns inconsistent with their identity, it can lead to emotional distress, disengagement from school, and increased mental health struggles.

The NASN position statement highlights the ethical responsibility of school nurses—and, by extension, all school personnel—to promote a safe and inclusive environment that respects students' gender identity. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, and other major medical organizations also recognize the importance of affirming gender identity in reducing health risks for LGBTQ+ youth. **SB 76 disregards these established guidelines and puts schools in direct conflict with evidence-based best practices.**

This bill would create a hostile environment for transgender and nonbinary students by effectively outing them against their will and subjecting them to potential harassment from peers and staff. Schools should be a place of learning, growth, and safety, not an institution that enforces exclusionary policies that endanger students. Teachers and school nurses are trusted adults who care for the well being of all students, and this bill seeks to harm our most vulnerable youth.

In alignment with the NASN's position and the overwhelming consensus of medical and educational professionals, I strongly urge you to oppose SB 76. Instead of legislating exclusion, Kansas should focus on policies that promote the health, safety, and academic success of all students. Respecting students' identities is not a political statement—it is a matter of basic human dignity and educational best practice.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kimberly Martin, MEd, BSN, RN

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

To the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to provide testimony in opposition of SB 76, which would ban employees in schools from using students' chosen names and pronouns. This is an extreme case of government overreach and is a clear-cut violation of the first amendment, which guarantees freedom of speech. It is also almost completely unenforceable, and will lead to he-said-she-said accusations and baseless harassment. The fact that this bill is being rushed through to committee suggests that its proponents know that it is unconstitutional and also deeply unpopular. Kansans will never support these extremist policies that aim to police our words and thoughts.

This is the first time that I have ever submitted testimony regarding a bill, and I have spoken with many others who have significantly ramped up their civic engagement and activism due to alarm over the recent wave of extremist policies sweeping the state. The timing is particularly painful for me personally because my father died recently, and I will be attending and speaking at his memorial service tomorrow. I cannot express how much I would rather be focusing my energy on his memory than writing this testimony, but I know that he would agree that this is more important.

My father didn't always "get" LGBTQ issues, and he sometimes found them confusing and, frankly, weird. But he understood that every person is entitled to self-determination and to respect. When I was in college I made my first transgender friend, and one year he spent Thanksgiving with my family since his hometown was across the country. My dad really struggled to keep his pronouns straight at first, regularly referring to him as "she", and he was starting to get frustrated with himself and the situation. But he kept making an effort, because he knew that using my friend's chosen name and pronouns was a sign of basic respect. That was fifteen years ago. After college my friend moved away and we didn't keep in regular touch, but after my dad's death he reached out to say how he remembered that Thanksgiving and how much it had meant to him that my dad had been warm and welcoming. Fifteen years, and he still remembered that connection. This is life. This is what it means to be human.

Our nation is at a crossroads. Everything that we believe in is at stake. I hope that you make the right decision.

Regards,  
Caroline Matson

RACHEL M. MCDANIEL, LSCSW, LCSW, SEP  
rachel@rachelmcdaniellscsw.com  
RACHEL MCDANIEL PSYCHOTHERAPY LLC  
2/7/2025

## OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, many thanks for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Rachel McDaniel and I am a voter in Newton Kansas. I am a Licensed Specialist Clinical Social worker in the States of Kansas, Missouri, & Oklahoma. I am also the valedictorian of a Christian seminary. I work in psychotherapy private practice serving primarily the LGBTQ+ population. I also live in a primarily Mennonite community and regularly receive gratitude from this community for the "Christ-like work" I do with the most vulnerable communities in modern society. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76 based on my expertise in human behavior and study of Christ's teachings.

I'm past trying to write to you like an academic, so let me speak candidly. Our country is facing an identity crisis that WILL define who we are. The attacks on the weakest members of our society does not support the basic rights granted by our constitution of LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. Children are being denied LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. Senate Bill 76 threatens the basic rights that our country was built upon.

Suicide is at an all time high with children. Suicide is a leading cause of death for children. Our future is losing hope and choosing to die rather than face the world we are creating for them. Children are dying from things like Senate Bill 76. When we are not safe to be ourselves we are not safe to be human.

Senate Bill 76 threatens to kill children. Senate Bill 76 threatens to jail and bankrupt teachers for showing compassion. Senate Bill 76 threatens the foundation of our society, our schools. Teachers keep our state and our country from collapse, daily. Teachers don't need one more thing to push them out of the field or threaten to bankrupt them.

I will happily produce the studies that back this testimony but citing studies in my many previous testimonies has gotten us nowhere. Instead I will close my testimony as a seminary valedictorian stating that Senate Bill 76 violates Christ's teachings. In the King James Bible Matthew 25:40 Christ said "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

One simple thing can change this. End this attack on children and teachers. Vote NO on Senate Bill 76. Thank you once again for your time and consideration.

KATE S. McELROY  
teubnermcelroy@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/6/2025

OPPONENT

Members of the committee, thank you for allowing me time to share my opinion on SB 76 today. My name is Kate McElroy and I am a voter in Wichita, Sedgwick County. I am writing to encourage you to vote NO on SB 76.

This bill affects me because my child uses a different name & pronouns than are on his birth certificate. His teachers and administrators at school use his chosen name & pronouns, and it has eased the stress and discomfort he used to feel at school. The bullying that he experienced at school has lessened now that the adults around him are honoring his chosen name. This bill would require teachers to NOT do what they know is best for students. It would also increase bullying behavior toward my child and other children in similar positions. Frankly, I am scared for the well-being of my child when he leaves the house already, and this bill would make things much, much worse. Currently, I know that he is safe at school and that his teachers are supporting him. If they suddenly are prevented from supporting him, he would be in an unsafe learning environment. A safe learning environment is essential for every child in Kansas, and this bill would take that away from them.

Additionally, the ability to bring legal action in the bill is way too broad and too loosely worded. It's impossible for teachers to know what gender is listed on the birth certificate of every child. It opens the door for frivolous lawsuits which would take valuable time and resources from a school district, all of which have too little time and money as it is.

Thank you again for hearing my opinion and thoughts on this bill. Please vote no on the passage of SB 76. Thank you.

Opponent Testimony of SB76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10th, 2025  
Lilly McElroy  
Assistant Teaching Professor, University of Kansas

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Lilly McElroy and I am writing today to voice my opposition to SB76. As a college educator, I strive to create a classroom environment in which all of my students are treated with respect and dignity. After all, the student population at the university comes from varied social and economic backgrounds and it is imperative that each of them be recognized as a person of worth. This is crucial for their learning and development. One of the ways that I show students the respect they deserve is by using their chosen names and preferred pronouns and I am appalled that a bill like SB76 is under consideration in our state. It would effectively make it actionable to treat human beings with decency. The bill's only purpose is cruelty.

While I teach adults, I'm also concerned about the negative impact SB76 would have on transgender youth because it would limit the support they can receive in their communities. Suppressing social transition does not help youth but instead actively harms them. We need to make sure that we are supporting young people instead of passing bills that would make their lives harder.

Finally, I would like to state that this bill would be a severe government overreach that aims to limit individual autonomy. Not only do I fear that SB76 will cause people pain and suffering, but I fear that it will curtail our First Amendment rights.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

Lilly McElroy

Landon McGee  
landonbmcgee@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, my sincere thanks for making space for me to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Landon McGee, and I am an educator and voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote No on SB 76.

I have been an educator for nine years. In that time, I've taught students as young as fourth grade and as old as graduating seniors at the college level, where I teach now. I've taught in Texas and Arkansas as well as Kansas, and I've worked with students from virtually every walk of life in that time. I believe that it's my duty, a duty I hold as sacred, to build trusted bonds with my students so that they can enter my classroom with an open mind, ready to learn and grow as people. That's true no matter what my student's political or religious background is, and no matter how far their views diverge from my own—when I am in the classroom, my duty, first and foremost, is to make sure that my students trust me. Without that trust, it is impossible for them to learn.

Aside from the issues with the scheme of enforcement proposed in this bill and the obvious issues with the First Amendment, both of which I'm sure the committee has heard plenty about, this issue of trust is the reason I am fundamentally opposed to SB 76. How on earth can I hope to build that trusted bond with my students if I am required, by law, to refer to them, to their face and in front of their peers, in a way that may humiliate or shame them? I find it hard to understand how anyone who has had a hand in crafting this bill could have done so after going through the process of teaching students—I encourage you all to put yourselves in the shoes of educators who, not wanting to hold a torch for any political agenda, simply want to make our students comfortable in our classrooms. No matter what personal views I have about gender and sexuality, I am committed to fundamentally respecting my students, and that, at very least, requires me to respect how my students refer to themselves. Placing teachers at odds with their students at the behest of the state government feels, at least to me, like an incredible violation of my autonomy as a teacher.

Again, I want to thank you for hearing out my frank thoughts on this matter. I sincerely hope that you will vote no on the passage of SB 76.

Dr. Briana McGeough  
House District 45 & Senate District 2  
Testimony in Opposition of SB 76

My name is Dr. Briana McGeough, and I am an Assistant Professor in the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare. My testimony is offered in my personal capacity as an educator and expert in the field of LGBTQ mental health and informed by my years of research and mental health practice in this field, not as a representative of the University of Kansas. My research focuses on understanding mental health challenges experienced by LGBTQ individuals, including transgender youth, and identifying strategies to promote the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ people.

I am testifying today because I strongly oppose SB 76, and I am concerned about the impact that this policy could have on the mental health and safety of transgender youth.

Past research has found that transgender youth whose chosen name and pronouns are used at school show considerably better mental health than youth who are referred to using the names and pronouns they were given at birth. Being referred to by one's chosen name in school is associated with lower depression, suicidal ideation, and suicidal behavior for transgender youth.<sup>1</sup> Past research has also found that transgender youth who have teachers that affirm their gender identities have better academic outcomes than those who do not.<sup>2, 3</sup>

This bill has the potential to contribute to significant harm for transgender youth. Because, tragically, disclosure of a transgender identity to caregivers can be met with violence and rejection, requiring educators to gain parental consent before using a child's chosen name and pronouns potentially increases transgender youth's risk for experiencing familial rejection, including physical and emotional abuse.<sup>4, 5</sup> Furthermore, transgender youth who are outed to their parents report greater levels of depression than youth who were not outed.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the harms to transgender youth, this bill requires educators to engage in practices that could be detrimental to the academic success, mental health, and safety of the students in their care, which is fundamentally at odds with the ethical principles guiding the conduct of educators.<sup>7</sup>

In sum, using a youth's chosen name in school is linked to better mental health and academic outcomes. Requiring teachers and other school personnel to gain parental consent before using chosen names and pronouns has the potential to put children at risk of rejection, violence, and mental health harms and forces educators to engage in practices that could be detrimental to the academic success, mental health, and safety of their students. As an educator, researcher, and mental health service provider committed to the mental health of transgender youth, I urge you to vote against this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> Russell, S. T., Pollitt, A. M., Li, G., & Grossman, A. H. (2018). Chosen name use is linked to reduced depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation, and suicidal behavior among transgender youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 63(4), 503-505.

<sup>2</sup> Poteat, V. P., Watson, R. J., & Fish, J. N. (2021). Teacher support moderates associations



among sexual orientation identity outness, victimization, and academic performance among LGBTQ+ youth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 50(8), 1634-1648.

<sup>3</sup> Ullman, J. (2019). Teacher positivity towards gender diversity: Exploring relationships and school outcomes for transgender and gender-diverse students. In *Gender and Sexuality in Education and Health* (pp. 42-55). Routledge.

<sup>4</sup> Thoma, B. C., Rezeppa, T. L., Choukas-Bradley, S., Salk, R. H., & Marshal, M. P. (2021). Disparities in childhood abuse between transgender and cisgender adolescents. *Pediatrics*, 148(2).

<sup>5</sup> Grossman, A. H., Park, J. Y., Frank, J. A., & Russell, S. T. (2021). Parental responses to transgender and gender nonconforming youth: Associations with parent support, parental abuse, and youths' psychological adjustment. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 68(8), 1260-1277.

<sup>6</sup> McCauley, P. S., Del Famo, A. J., Caba, A. E., Renley, B. M., Shuler, S., Eaton, L. A., & Watson, R. J. (2024). Stress of being outed to parents, LGBTQ family support, and depressive symptoms among sexual and gender diverse youth. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 34(1), 205-221.

<sup>7</sup> National Education Association (2020). *Code of Ethics for Educators*.  
<https://www.nea.org/resource-library/code-ethics-educators>

Lucas McLaughlin  
lucasdmclaughlin@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/10/2025

## OPPONENT

My name is Lucas McLaughlin, a voter in Douglas Country who is writing today to strongly encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76. Thank you for Chairman Erickson and members of the committee for hearing my thoughts on SB 76.

If this state believes in the founding documents, us as human beings and citizens of the United States and of citizens of Kansas have certainly unalienable rights. We have a right to free speech. This bill overtly and unjustly violates every person by erasing anyone who does not conform to the christian ideas of gender and sexuality. This is a blatant attempt to bring religion into a state which was founded on principles of freedom. Should that freedom extend only to white cis-gendered people? This bill takes infringes upon minor's rights to freely express themselves, and targets teachers and students which has proven to lead to upticks in violence and hate. If the committee is dedicated to upholding the rights of individuals and protecting them, then this bill should not be passed. While parents undoubtedly have an important part in their children's lives, the state infringing upon children's rights no matter who their parents are creates an environment ripe for bullying, harassment, and the correlated bigotry and miseducation by certain political forces. If the committee believes their truly represent the will of the people, then they cannot allow religious group to hijack and dominate the political landscape. This would only serve to hurt people, or prop up people who only wish to hurt or demonize other people. We are all humans, deserving of acceptance, I strongly urge you to vote NO on SB 76.

Thank you all again for hearing my testimony, I hope this encourages you all to take the right action and vote no on the passage of SB 76. Thank you.

Opponent of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Campbell McNorton  
Private Citizen

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for taking time to read through my testimony and considering my opposition testimony on SB 76. I am a resident of Manhattan, Kansas, and I urge you to vote no.

To begin, I am a young voter in the state of Kansas who loves to live here. I am also a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Growing up here, I have always been proud to be a Kansan, as I felt supported as a Queer person by the leaders in my community, including all of my teachers. This support and safety had to do with teachers respecting mine and my friends' pronouns and names. Senate Bill 76 would take away the feeling of safety and acceptance in schools, something that many young LGBTQ+ people rely on.

If teachers are not allowed to call students by their preferred names and pronouns, it opens the doorway for students and peers to do the same. Promoting transphobia and hate to be spread to young LGBTQ+ individuals. This is alarming considering the violence that young trans people face. Trans people, especially young trans people, are more likely to be a victim to a violent crime, experience food insecurity, and experience homelessness. These are often linked back to growing up in an unaccepting household and being without a support network outside of the house. SB 76 would take away the much needed support network, putting young, gender non-conforming Kansans at danger.

Furthermore, studies show that there is a direct link between anti-LGBTQ+ laws being passed, and an increase in trans teen suicide attempts. Young transgender people have a 46% chance of considering suicide, and that will only increase if they do not feel accepted at school.

Additionally, the language in this bill is incredibly broad and puts teachers at risk. There is no way to enforce this completely across the state, and it is not possible for every teacher to know the birth certificate information for every student. I worry about the ways this could be used to harm teachers, and dissuade others from joining the profession. Teachers and administration should focus on providing the best education for their students, preventing them from providing affirming care will only make their jobs harder and more burdensome.

Overall, students deserve to feel respected at school by their teachers and peers. If the language teachers can use is policed, transgender people are more likely to be outed and harassed.

I want all students that attend schools to feel safe, and welcome them for who they are. So, please oppose SB 76 and protect young Kansans from discrimination.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony, and please vote no on SB 76.

Campbell McNorton (she/they)

Opponent of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Cara McNorton  
Private Citizen

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for taking time to read through my testimony. I am a resident of Manhattan, Kansas, and I urge you to vote no on the passage of SB 76.

I have been an educator for 20 years. I spent 10 years in the classroom. The last 10 years I have been an Instructional Learning Coach and a MTSS, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Coordinator. My job is essentially to make sure students are learning and teachers are supported in their instruction.

Safe. Inclusive. Respected. Valued. Worthy. As a veteran educator, I have come to the understanding that those words have to be the foundation of academic learning spaces for students and educators. Ask any teacher what is the largest impact for academic achievement and they will respond “relationships.” Relationships are built on this foundation. SB 76 would topple this foundation we work so hard to build by forcing teachers to not use preferred names and pronouns. It’s not the culture I desire my school and classrooms to have.

Today, I led data meetings for the 6 teams I support in my school. We analyzed reading and math data but it was the smallest part of our discussion. We spent the majority of our time discussing behavior data, social-emotional data, and attendance data. This is the real data; the data that interrupts or supports academic achievement data. This bill would have a direct impact on these areas for transgender students which would then directly impact academic data negatively. I also can’t help but wonder the magnitude of impact for the entire academic community; peers, friends, family members, as well.

It’s February. This is the time educators start asking themselves, “Am I done? Am I going to say the demands of this profession, with the lack of support, are finally causing me to leave the profession? Am I tired of someone else telling me how I have to show up for my students they don’t even know?” Allowing some students such as a student named Samantha or Samuel choose to use the name Sam, but not all students in learning spaces is discriminatory. Please do not tell us we have to model and teach discrimination. Please do not tell us to not love and respect our kids, students, in the way we know they need to be- by honoring their names and their pronouns. My school and this state can not afford to lose educators out of the fear of being sued for respecting and loving students.

Mrs. McNorton. That's what some think my name should be at school. But I'm not Mrs. McNorton. I'm Ms. Cara. I like my name. It has a special meaning to me. If you took the time to know me and how I show up everyday for my students and their teachers, you would say I'm Ms. Cara, too. I chose this name. I made this decision. I was once told I had to use Mrs. McNorton. I tried it and it lasted 2 days. It wasn't me. It wasn't who I wanted to be. It was awful. I would never want my student to go through the same experience because a Senate Bill forces me to do that to them.

The thought of one of my students having attendance issues, social-emotional issues, or behavior issues which led to academic issues because of a preferred pronoun and personally-chosen name is absolutely heartbreaking to me. I want students to feel safe, valued and be ready to learn. I believe in education. Students and educators do not need one more barrier to interrupt academic learning. This bill is harmful to our collective future success for all of Kansas.

Please oppose SB 76 and protect educational spaces that hold our most precious commodity: our future leaders. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Cara McNorton

Opponent Testimony of SB 76

For the Senate Education Committee

February 10, 2025

Darin McQueen

Private Citizen

Chairman and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to express my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Darin McQueen, and I am a United States Army veteran from Douglas County. I am writing to urge the committee to vote no on SB 76.

In recent weeks, I have seen a slew of policies from the state and federal government that attempt to erase the existence of our trans and queer communities. I find this bill to do precisely that: deny those members of our community simply because of who they are. This bill would do nothing to benefit the children attending our schools. Instead, this bill directly hurts students, faculty members, and their relationships with one another. This bill intends to protect faculty members who intentionally deadname or use the incorrect pronouns for students because of “free speech.” I appreciate that the status quo enables faculty to use the names and pronouns that the student identifies with.

I love Kansas; this is our home. These recent targeted attacks against some of our most vulnerable citizens have been particularly unsettling and offensive. I ask the Chairman and

Members of the Committee to stand with their constituents and vote no on SB 76. Thank you for your consideration.



Opposition Testimony for SB 76

For The Senate Education Committee

February 10th, 2025

Ruth A. Miller

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

I oppose everything that is proposed in SB 76. It's a hate bill towards all children and public school personnel. I have spent 31 years of my life working in public schools as a teacher and as an elementary school principal, and I have never experienced the legislators passing such a hateful bill that allows and endorses bullies. Section 'd' and 'e' are particularly detrimental to the function of learning but also to maintaining a safe environment in our schools. I can't see how anybody could regulate this law in a school environment without fear of being sued for protecting the innocent students on a daily basis. Do you want Kansas schools to spend taxpayer money on frivolous law suits instead of books or teachers? Do you want bullying to return and be rewarded?

Let's be realistic to the fact that this bill was proposed to destroy the essential part of public education—tolerance and student protection for non-bullies. It also insults the people who work in our schools. Don't we have enough problems to solve without creating more?

Don't kill the essence of Kansas Public Schools—tolerance and equity. Save a child, Vote NO!

Sincerely,

Ruth A. Miller,

Pittsburg, Kansas

Susan Minto  
susanminto@gmail.com  
private citizen  
2/10/2025

opponent

I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76. I beg you, stop wasting MY TAX DOLLARS fighting culture wars. No one need benefits from harmful and unnecessary laws.

This bill conveniently ignores students' rights, including the right to privacy, self-determination, and their own free speech and expression. The damages section in this bill is overly broad and paves the way for litigation based on overhearing conversations. The total unenforceability of this bill may lead to excessive administrative burdens (wasting tax dollars) on our local schools and higher education institutions, both in creating systems for attempting its enforcement and in costs (tax dollars) defending the institutions and its employees against frivolous lawsuits.

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

Genesis Merriett  
genserudition@gmail.com  
PRIVATE CITIZEN  
2/7/2025

## OPPONENT

My name is Genesis Merriett and I am a voter in Wichita. I am writing writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76.

I oppose this bill because the usage of a different name and pronouns from the ones assigned at birth causes no significant emotional, mental, or physical harm to anyone, but the usage of a name and pronouns that someone is not aligned with may cost them their mental and emotional health, or even their life. I have several loved ones who use different names and pronouns from the ones they were assigned at birth, and I have had the wonderful opportunity to watch them grow, love, and be happy because their identity has been valued and respected. We are more than names and pronouns; we are humans, and we should all be treated as such with respect and dignity.

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.

GRETCHEN MEYER  
gretchenmeyer6@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 Gretchen Meyer and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to ask the committee to vote NO on SB 76"

As a Christian, I strongly oppose SB 76 because I believe that all children deserve love, acceptance, and the support of their families and communities. The proposed legislation undermines the basic human rights of transgender youth by depriving them of the opportunity to fully participate in their school community, and by shaming them for their identities. Its very existence increases the risk of bullying by making it clear that it is acceptable to exclude a child from society because of who they are.

As a high school teacher, I have taught several transgender students and I have seen firsthand the life altering impact of social acceptance and support. The trust that such support fosters can permanently change the course of a child's life, steering them away from self-destructive behaviors and giving them a bright future. I believe that if SB 76 is passed, it will erode the trust that students have in their teachers, coaches, and counselors by making it that much harder for adults in schools to be Allies to these children. This trust protects transgender students, many of whom do not have the support of their families, by giving them an adult mentor to whom they can turn for help and understanding. If these pivotal relationships are undermined by the proposed legislation, the results will be deadly.

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

Amanda Mogoi  
Amandaleann0412@yahoo.com  
Private citizen  
2/7/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson and members of this committee, thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 76. My name is Amanda Mogoi and I am a Wichita, Kansas resident. Today I'm writing to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 76.

SB 76 is a dangerous bill that sets a precedent that the government can violate there constitutional rights of United States citizens. The First Amendment of the US Constitution, section 7, established the right to freedom of speech for all US citizens. Teachers must be able to speak to the youth in their care without fear of retaliation. This bill creates a witch-hunt where anyone can file a lawsuit based on rumors and gossip.

In conclusion, thank you for hearing testimony on this bill and I encourage you to vote no on SB 76. Thank you.

Christopher Molla  
chrismolla@gmail.com  
Private citizen  
2/7/2025

Opponent

Chairman Erickson and Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 76 with you today. My name is Christopher Molla and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 76

SB 76 Will cause harm to people who cause no harm. It violates the privacy of educators and students, enables politicians to meddle in the private lives of citizens, and puts students' safety at risk. As a parent of a middle-schooler who has been subjected to bullying and harassment at school, I have direct experience with the cumulative deleterious effects of such aggression on both physical and mental health. By prohibiting children from exercising expression as simple and basic as how they wish to be addressed, this bill communicates not only that these children do not fit in and are somehow less than their peers (a cruel lie) but enables those who would commit aggression against them.

This bill is purported to support and encourage free speech, but it is plain to see that it has precisely the opposite effect. In reality it serves to SILENCE the speech of students, educators, anyone who works with kids. It is also clear that this is by design.

Furthermore, while we have for decades listened to politicians gripe about the proliferation of frivolous lawsuits, this bill would generate a storm of unnecessary and nonsensical legal action by enabling a casual vigilantism. Again, this is all because a child wants to be addressed by a particular name, and the adults in that child's life respect the child's wishes.

SB 76 is un-American, un-Christian, and just plain mean.

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

Megan Mooers  
megan.m.mooers@gmail.com  
Private Citizen  
2/6/0025

## Opponent

I am encouraged to thank the committee here, but I do not thank you. I resent that I need to speak on this, and that you legislators are speaking on this. I am angry that, instead of doing anything to meaningfully or tangibly help the people of Kansas, or Wyandotte County specifically, that you are abusing the legislative process and my tax dollars in order to debate whether or not to deliberately harm children and the educators who try to support them. Of course you should vote no on SB 76.

This bill is not going to prevent transgender children.

If you want to help kids in Kansas, support them. Give them healthcare. Give them broadband internet. Fund their schools. Pay their teachers. Give them science, music, and art. Give them the tools for success in agriculture and technology. Give them skills that Kansas needs. Give them programs that help them grow. Give our children - not just our trans children, but all of our children - reason to do anything but flee Kansas as soon as they are able. GIVE to our children. Stop looking for shreds to steal away.

The people who introduce and give time to proposals like this are squandering the public trust. I implore you all to rethink how you do this job, and start coming to work ready to debate how best to HELP Kansans, not hurt our children and educators.

Opponent of SB76

For the Senate Education Committee

February 10, 2025

Dr. Solomon Moore

School Counselor

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony for Senate Bill 76. As a Kansas school counselor, counselor educator, and community member, I am uniquely aware of the detrimental impact that marginalization and oppression have on our LGBTQIA+ students. This is especially true for transgender and nonbinary youth (and adults). Public education has come a long way in supporting LGBTQIA+ students in the last 10-15 years. Unfortunately, this bill would revert us back into the harmful, toxic environment these students endured in the 1990s and earlier. Recent cases, such as *Kluge v. Brownsburg Community Schools* (2023) demonstrate the harm and disruption of the learning environment that can occur when school employees don't use a student's chosen name and pronouns. In this case, the court ruled that the school employee's actions of not affirming the transgender students' identities caused harm. I believe this bill would cause immense harm to Kansas gender expansive students.

Additionally, school counselors have ethical standards that guide our profession. Our ethical standards admonish us to foster and affirm all students and their identity (ASCA, 2022). Our ethical standards also have a specific section on marginalized students that advises us to actively work to establish a safe, affirming, and inclusive environment where all members feel acceptance (ASCA, 2022). Unfortunately, SB 76 does not align with these ethical standards. As well, ASCA has a position statement on transgender and nonbinary youth. Specifically, ASCA's position is that *school staff should address students by their chosen/affirmed name and pronouns corresponding to their gender identity, regardless of whether there has been a legal name change* (2022). The Kansans Can Competency Framework maintained by the Kansas State Department of Education (2024) promotes self-efficacy, empathy, and social awareness. How can we teach and model these skills for students when we are discriminating against and marginalizing an entire group of learners in our schools? Further, the Kansas Educator Code of Conduct includes *nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students*. It also mandates *providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner* (KSDE, 2014). SB 76 goes directly against these responsibilities to students.



Addressing students by their chosen/affirmed name and pronouns ensures academic success and literally saves lives. According to the latest school climate survey by GLSEN, LGBTQIA+ students who experienced victimization were three times more likely to miss school in the past month, have lower GPAs, and feel a lack of belonging (2021). Research shows that school belonging is a protective factor for students' academic success as well as lowers their risk for suicidality. LGBTQIA+ youth are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers (Johns et al., 2020). Additionally, in a 2023 survey by The Trevor Project, they found that 41% of LGBTQIA+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide, including roughly half of transgender youth! Currently, the data for youth suicide in Kansas shows a decrease from 2023 to 2024 (Backman, 2025). While this is wonderful and celebratory data, I fear SB 76 will cause a significant increase in suicidality for transgender and nonbinary students in Kansas if it were to pass. Please don't risk these students' lives. I implore you to vote no on SB 76.

I want Kansas to be known as a state that supports, affirms, and ensures the safety of ALL students. This includes our transgender and nonbinary students.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Solomon Moore', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

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

School Counselor

Opponent Testimony of SB 76

For the Senate Education Committee

February 10, 2025

Sarah Mors

Private Citizen

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to read my testimony for the opposition of SB 76. I know the changing of names and pronouns can be difficult to understand. It is my belief that people, no matter what age, deserve basic respect. It is well documented by the American Psychological Association, as well as the American Medical Association, that transgender people do exist and benefit from gender affirming treatment. Part of that treatment is acknowledging differing pronouns and changing names to better suit their identity. If schools can accommodate these changes, they should. I believe that those with basic empathy can acknowledge and respect, if not accept these changes. Transgender students make up a minority of the student body. Minority populations don't deserve to be persecuted or denied care.

The time of the court can be better spent creating changes in Kansas that improve the lives of all Kansans.



Opponent Testimony of SB 76  
For the Senate Education Committee  
February 10, 2025  
Taylor Morton, Kansas Lobbyist and Policy Analyst  
Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 76 on behalf of Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes ("PPGPV"). PPGPV is the advocacy and political arm of Comprehensive Health of Planned Parenthood Great Plains and Planned Parenthood Great Plains ("PPGP"), which offer compassionate sexual and reproductive health care to patients with four health center locations in Kansas. SB 76 would effectively ban school and postsecondary employees from using a student's chosen pronouns and name if they are inconsistent with the student's birth certificate.

The limited exemptions in this bill do not detract from the harm SB 76 would cause transgender and nonbinary students in Kansas. Simply the introduction of anti-trans legislation like SB 76 is harmful—with 86% of transgender and nonbinary youth reporting a negative impact of such policies on their mental health.<sup>1</sup> Transgender and nonbinary youth are 2-2.5 times as likely to experience depressive symptoms, seriously consider suicide, and attempt suicide than their cisgender peers.<sup>2</sup>

Transgender students also experience a higher prevalence of poor mental health, and a lower prevalence of school connectedness compared with their cisgender peers.<sup>3</sup> School connectedness is a significant protective factor for transgender and nonbinary youth and is associated with decreased anxiety and depression.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, strong student-teacher relationships and higher school connectedness are associated with lower rates of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use among transgender and nonbinary youth.<sup>5</sup> Individuals who are accepted and supported in their gender identity show better mental health and quality of life outcomes.<sup>6</sup>

In a 2024 study, transgender and nonbinary youth reported lower rates of suicidality when the people around them respected their pronouns. Those who found their school to be gender-affirming reported better mental health outcomes.<sup>7</sup> Being misgendered is a source of distress for transgender and nonbinary youth, and the use of chosen name and pronouns in social contexts can significantly improve mental health.<sup>8</sup> Teachers, counselors, peers, and other trusted members of school communities can support transgender and nonbinary youth by referring to them by their chosen names. When transgender students' names and pronouns are respected at school and elsewhere, they report 71% fewer symptoms of severe depression and a 34% decrease in thoughts of suicide.<sup>9</sup>

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

PPGPV strongly urges the Committee to oppose SB 76.

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

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

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/su/su7304a6.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022440521000832>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379718321299?via%3Dihub>

<sup>6</sup> <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2015-39781-006.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survev-2024/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X18303355?via%3Dihub>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X18300855?via%3Dihub>

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

February 7th, 2025

Chair Erikson and Senate Committee on Education Members:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,  
Rose Murray, MS, APRN