

Wednesday, Feb 16, 2022

HB 2662 - Opponent

Oral Virtual Testimony

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Good afternoon to all and thank you to the committee for the chance to speak here today.

I am Chloe Chaffin, a sophomore education student at Washburn University and I stand before you now in staunch opposition to HB2662.

As you have already heard many times over recently and will likely continue to hear today, this Parental Bill of Rights as it now stands would increase the aggression aimed at our teachers, ramp up the public pressure, pile on the scrutiny, and ultimately push many qualified teachers out of the field at a time when they are needed most. And of course, I agree that all of that is true. It especially makes me nervous as a future teacher who worries that I already feel burnout some days before I've even graduated.

But above and beyond all of that, I have two more points I would like to discuss with you now instead.

Number 1: Line 34 on page 3 of the bill states that all tests and quizzes must be posted on the district website for public viewing before the start of the school year. It does not just ask for major concepts, but exact copies of the test. This worries me from an academic integrity standpoint. This directly gives students access to knowing which questions they should study for and would, unfortunately, give students the impression that they do not need to be responsible for all content covered in a given unit, but that instead, they can cram the night before, memorize a few select answers, and tune out the rest.

This is a terrible way to teach. It will lead to a rise in instances of classroom cheating and students will walk away with poorer study skills for it.

And now, my second point: starting at line two on page four, this bill states that all professional development courses must be made public far in advance, but this limits the flexibility of our schools and I have a very personal example of how this can go wrong.

When I was in seventh or maybe eighth grade, the high school that I would soon feed into lost two students back to back to suicide within the same week. I was taking health at the time and though it had never been mentioned up until that point in my formal education, that next week my teachers and others all across the district did what they did best and adapted to the new needs of students.

From what I gathered, they had all been given extra emergency professional development training on short notice on how to talk to young people about grief and mental health. As a young person who was myself battling depression in silence, I found these conversations more valuable than you could ever know, but if this bill had been in effect back then, I know that the very rigidity it touts as a feature of transparency would actually have been an extreme barrier to helping students when they needed it most.

Please vote in opposition of HB2662 to protect academic integrity and so that teachers can act in the face of quickly changing emergency situations as they see fit.