

Thank you Mister Chairman and committee,

My name is Quinn Perry and I'm the Policy and Government Affairs Director for the Idaho School Boards Association. I'm here today on behalf of the 900 school board members who volunteer their time serving their local school districts and charter schools across the state. We are opposed to House Bill 120 and would ask that you hold it in committee/send it to the 14th order for amendment.

Our objections can be summed up in three points – **its conflict with current law and practice, local governance, and equity.**

One of the largest concerns we have is that “sexuality” is not defined in state code. Offhand, we have thought of various areas of instruction where sexuality as an undefined term could spill into - including Anatomy & Physiology, Biology, History, Literature, and even animal sciences. This means Districts and Schools would be only able to teach many segments of these courses – some of which are required in order to graduate – to students whose parents or guardians explicitly opt their students in.

Another example of conflict is that schools and districts are required to disseminate information on harassment, intimidation and bullying, annually to all school personnel, parents and students. A large component of this information includes sexual harassment or assault prevention and response. Hypothetically, as written, this legislation would prevent that distribution on these extremely important topics unless there was explicit consent from every student's parent or guardian. These are just a few examples as to why the language of the proposed legislation is particularly broad and could be unintentionally burdensome for our schools and districts.

We really see this as a local governance issue. School boards are duly elected or appointed by their community. If the board, with input from their patrons, felt it was best for their school to offer their sex education courses as an opt-in, they are completely within their right to do that.

I'd also like to point out that parents and guardians have ample opportunities to view any and all instructional materials that their student will see and can request an alternate lesson. But HB 120 is lacking a fiscal note, which will create an unfunded mandate at the local level.

Undoubtedly, an opt-in system is going to cost districts and schools in the areas of alternative classroom space, instruction, and supervision.

Lastly, as a part of ISBA's vision, we do not believe the proposal before you is equitable because it has the potential of putting our most at-risk students at an even greater risk. Many students are lucky enough to have involved parents or guardians who initiate and have ongoing discussions around sex and reproductive health. Many students, however, are simply not so lucky.

I want to close by saying that schools and districts are extremely cognizant of the sensitive nature surrounding sex education and reproductive health. No district or school desires to cross boundaries, and many districts go beyond what is required to make parents/guardians aware of their parental rights and options.

We ask you to consider our concerns with House Bill 120. Thank you, Mister Chairman, and I'd be happy to stand for questions.