



Congressman Jared Polis

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H.R. 4530 – The “Student Non-Discrimination Act” (SNDA)

Background

- Every day, students who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) are subjected to pervasive discrimination, including harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence, which is harmful to both students and our education system. Surveys indicate as many as nine in 10 LGBT students have been bullied.
- These hurtful actions deprive students of equal educational opportunities and contribute to high rates of absenteeism, dropout, adverse health consequences, and academic underachievement among LGBT youth. Left unchecked, discrimination can lead, and has led, to life-threatening violence and to suicide. And when school officials engage in discriminatory treatment, or are indifferent to harassing behavior, LGBT students’ constitutional rights are infringed.
- While Federal civil rights statutes expressly address discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin, they do not explicitly include sexual orientation or gender identity and, as a result, LGBT students and parents have often had limited legal recourse for this kind of discrimination.

What does the “Student Non-Discrimination Act” do?

- The “Student Non-Discrimination Act” (SNDA) would establish a comprehensive Federal prohibition of discrimination in public schools based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.
- SNDA would provide protections for LGBT students and ensure that all students have access to public education in a safe environment free from discrimination, including harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence.
- SNDA would also provide meaningful and effective remedies (loss of federal funding and legal cause of action for victims) for discrimination in public schools based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, modeled after Title IX.

Supporting Organizations

American Association of University Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American Counseling Association
American Federation of Teachers
Gay-Straight Alliance Network
GLAD (Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders)
GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network)
Human Rights Campaign
Lambda Legal

NAACP
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Education Association
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Women's Law Center
School Social Work Association of America
Transgender Law Center

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Further Reading

- [NPR: Justice Department Intervenes In Gay Rights Suit](#)
- [Documentary Film: Out In Silence](#)
- [ACLU: High School Student Takes On Anti-Gay Harassment And Wins](#)
- [ACLU: Nguon v. Wolf - Case Profile](#)
- [ACLU: Outing at Hollis F. Price Middle College High School - Case Profile](#)
- [ACLU: Gillman v. Holmes County School District - Case Profile](#)
- [ACLU: Russellville, Alabama School Prom Discrimination](#)