



March 23, 2023

**Support the Rights of All Students and Parents
Support H.Res. 219, Oppose H.R. 5**

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 230 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, and the 229 undersigned organizations, we urge you to support the rights and inclusion of all students and parents in our public school system by supporting H.Res. 219, the Bill of Rights for Students and Parents, and opposing H.R. 5, the Parents Bill of Rights Act. As the civil and human rights community, we have fought for more than 100 years for the rights of *all* students and parents to attend and be fully included in well-resourced public schools that prepare them for their futures.¹ The Bill of Rights for Students and Parents sets forth a vision respecting and honoring the dignity and worth of every child — a vision supported by the overwhelming majority of parents in the country. In contrast, H.R. 5 seeks to undermine the relationship between parents and teachers, to facilitate book banning, and to make our most marginalized children less safe.

During this time in which proponents of discrimination and exclusion are creating policies and legislation to harm students and undermine the learning environment for everyone, support for developing supportive, inclusive, safe, and responsive public schools could not be more important. In a recent national survey, 80 percent or more of parents said that it was very or extremely important that their child be honest, ethical, hardworking, helpful to those in need, and accepting of people who are different from them. **It is these parental values that are reflected in H.Res. 219.**² No matter our color, background, or zip code, we want our kids to have an education that imparts honesty about who we are, integrity in how we treat others, and courage to do what's right.

¹ See, for example: *Niagara's Declaration of Principles, 1905* available at: <https://glc.yale.edu/niagaras-declaration-principles-1905>, *Mendez v. Westminster School Dist.*, 64 F. Supp. 544 (S.D. Cal. 1946), *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), Davis, Julie L. *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities*. 2013, *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974), 2013., *Children Out of School In America*. Children's Defense Fund. 1974. Available at: <https://digital.lib.utk.edu/collections/islandora/object/cdf%3A385/datastream/PDF/view>, *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982), Heumann, Judith and Kristen Joiner. *Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist*. 2020.

² Minkin, Rachel and Juliana Menasce Horowitz. "Parenting in America Today." *Pew Research Center*. January 24, 2023. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/01/24/parenting-in-america-today/>

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Similarly, 80 percent of parents want to protect the ability of young people to have access to books from which they can learn about and understand different perspectives and help them grow into adults who can think for themselves.³ H.Res. 219 recognizes this near-universal view that censorship and book banning “undermine the education of all students, take choices away from all students and their families, and limit the opportunities of parents, families, and children to access an education and think critically about the world around them.”⁴

H.R. 5 seeks to create detrimental harm to our most marginalized children, erase the complicated and difficult history of our nation, and damage parent and teacher relationships. Instead of promoting the values and priorities that the overwhelming majority of parents from all backgrounds and neighborhoods share, the bill would undermine important public health and child well-being data by effectively eliminating anonymous surveys of students; would harm those most vulnerable LGBTQ+ youth who are unable to come out to even their own parents by forcibly outing them;⁵ would embolden a small group of activists who are using book bans to selectively stamp out the perspectives of Black people, LGBTQ+ people, and other historically marginalized groups;⁶ and would bog schools down with reporting and commenting requirements that bear no relationship to proven parent and family engagement practices.⁷

We ask that you strongly support H.Res. 219, strongly oppose H.R. 5, and reject attacks on the rights of *all* students and parents to attend and be fully included in well-resourced public schools that prepare them

³ “Voters Oppose Book Bans in Libraries”. American Library Association. Available at: <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/voters-oppose-book-bans-libraries>

⁴ H.Res.219, The Bill of Rights for Student and Parents

⁵ Many LGBTQ youth find support and acceptance when they choose to come out to their parents; forcibly outing an LGBTQ student on a bureaucratically imposed timeline does not support these students or their parents and has been deemed a privacy violation (see *Nguon v. Wolf*, in which a federal court held that Nguon had a “Constitutionally protected privacy right with respect to disclosure of her sexual orientation” to a parent <https://www.aclu.org/cases/nguon-v-wolf>). Forcibly outing a student may present a significant risk to their health and safety, including housing stability. LGBTQ+ young people are more than twice as likely (120 percent more likely) to experience homelessness, compared to non-LGBTQ+ young people. See, for example: “Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America”. Voices of Youth Count. (2017). Available at: <https://voicesofyouthcount.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/VoYC-National-Estimates-Brief-Chapin-Hall-2017.pdf>.

⁶ For an instructive historical analog, see: Gates, Henry Louis Jr. “Who’s Afraid of Black History.” *The New York Times*. February 17, 2023. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/17/opinion/desantis-florida-african-american-studies-black-history.html>. For more on book bans see, for example, Paz, Isabella Grullón and Maria Cramer. “How Students Fought a Book Ban and Won, for Now.” *The New York Times*. October 2, 2021. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/02/us/york-pennsylvania-school-books.html> and Bristow, Holly. “Moms 4 Liberty Brevard asking for 19 more books to be pulled from school libraries.” *Fox35 Orlando*. March 23, 2023. Available at: <https://www.fox35orlando.com/news/moms-4-liberty-brevard-asking-for-19-more-books-to-be-pulled-from-school-libraries>.

⁷ See, for example: “National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.” National PTA. Available at: <https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/family-school-partnerships#explore>, Jacques, Catherine and Alma Villegas. “Strategies for Equitable Family Engagement.” State Support Network. December 2018. Available at: https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/10/equitable_family_engag_508.pdf, Mapp, K. L. & Bergman, E. “Dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships (Version 2)”. 2019. Available at: www.dualcapacity.org, Joyce L. Epstein, and Associates. *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. 2019. “School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Fourth Edition”.

for their futures. If you have any questions, please reach out to Liz King, senior program director at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, at king@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,

National (135)

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
A Way Home America
AACTE (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education)
Act To Change
Advocacy Institute
Advocates for Youth
All4Ed
American Association of University Women
American Atheists
American Civil Liberties Union
American Humanist Association
American School Counselor Association
Anti-Defamation League
Apiary for Practical Support
Arab American Institute (AAI)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Athlete Ally
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Campaign for Our Shared Future
Campus Pride
Care in Action
Catholics for Choice
Center for American Progress
Center for Applied Transgender Studies
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research (CLEAR)
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Collective Power for Reproductive Justice
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
EducateUS: SIECUS In Action
Education Leaders of Color (EdLoC)
Education Reform Now
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
End Rape On Campus

Equal Rights Advocates
Equality Federation
Equity Forward
Evaluation, Data Integration, and Technical Assistance (EDIT) Program
Family Equality
Feminist Campus
Fenway Institute
First Focus Campaign for Children
FORGE, Inc.
Girls Inc.
GLAAD
GLBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders (GLAD)
GLSEN
Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights
Hindu American Foundation
Hispanic Federation
Houston Area Urban League
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights First
IDRA
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
Impact Fund
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Indivisible
interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth
Interfaith Alliance
Japanese American Citizens League
Juvenile Law Center
KIPP Public Schools
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
Lambda Legal
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Lawyers for Good Government
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Matthew Shepard Foundation
MomsRising
Movement Advancement Project
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Association of School Psychologists
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Center for Youth Law
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National LGBT Cancer Network
National Organization for Women
National Urban League
National Women's Law Center
New American Leaders Action Fund
New Generation Equity
Oregonizers
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Plume Health
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Citizen
Public Justice
Red Wine & Blue
Reproductive Rights Coalition
School Board Partners
Sexual Violence Prevention Association (SVPA)
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network
SPLC Action Fund
Stand for Children
Tahirih Justice Center
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Arc of the United States
The Education Trust
The Personal Stories Project
The Sikh Coalition
The Workers Circle
TransAthlete
True Colors United
Trust Women

UnidosUS
Unitarian Universalist Association
United State of Women (USOW)
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
VoteProChoice
Voto Latino
Wayfinder Foundation
We Testify
Whole Woman's Health
Whole Woman's Health Alliance
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
YWCA USA

State/Local (95)

A Woman's Choice of Charlotte
A Woman's Choice of Greensboro
A Woman's Choice of Jacksonville
A Woman's Choice of Raleigh
Acadiana Queer Collective
Aces NYC
Action Together New Jersey
African American Office of Gay Concerns
AIDS Foundation Chicago
Alliance for Quality Education
Arkansas Black Gay Men's Forum
Avow Texas
Bans Off Miami
Black Californians United for Early Care and Education
Carolina for All
Central Florida Jobs with Justice
Chicago Abortion Fund
Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights
Cobalt
Democrats for Education Reform DC (DFER DC)
Democrats for Education Reform Massachusetts
Democrats for Education Reform New York
Detroit Disability Power
DFER Colorado
Disability Law Center
Dutchess County Progressive Action Alliance
Education Reform Now
Education Reform Now CT
Education Reform Now Texas

Equality California
Equality Illinois
Equality South Dakota
Equality Virginia
EqualityMaine
Faces of Fallen Fathers
FL National Organization for Women
Florida Council of Churches
Florida Health Justice Project
Forever Caring Evonné
Gender Justice
GLSEN New Mexico
Greater Milwaukee Urban League
Greater Orlando National Organization for Women
Illinois Families for Public Schools
Independent Voters of Illinois-Independent Precinct Organization
Indivisible DuPage
Indivisible Georgia Coalition
Indivisible Miami
Jane's Due Process
JASMYN, Inc.
Lafayette Citizens Against Censorship
Latino Memphis
Learning Rights Law Center
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Louisiana Citizens Against Censorship
Louisiana Coalition for Reproductive Freedom
Louisiana Progress
Louisiana Trans Advocates
Maine Parent Federation
Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition
Mazzoni Center
Memphis Urban League
Michigan Alliance for Special Education
Michigan Education Justice Coalition
Missouri Health Care for All
NASD
National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis
NJ Community Schools Coalition
North Carolina Justice Center
OutFront Minnesota
OutNebraska
Parent Education Organizing Council

Paterson Alliance
Paterson Education Foundation
PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)
Pride Action Tank
Pro Choice Missouri
Pro-Choice North Carolina
Progress Florida
Queer Northshore
Rad Family, a project of North Jersey Pride
Reproductive Freedom Acadiana
Save Our Schools NJ
SHERo Mississippi
Silver State Equality-Nevada
Solid Foundation Youth Outreach
Southern Echo Inc.
St. Tammany Library Alliance
The Ezekiel Project
The Parents' Place of MD
The Urban League of Philadelphia
The Womxn Project
Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh
Urban League of Middle Tennessee
Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations