

Members of the Colorado Title Board
Wednesday, February 21, 2024
Remarks in response to Initiative #142

To the members of the Colorado Title Board:

My name is MB Childs and I am submitting remarks for the record on the concerns I have regarding single subject in initiative #142. As a parent, I am concerned about the overarching impact of this initiative and the language used in it.

My initial objective is that Initiative #142 uses broad language to list a plethora of “public school representatives” in a minor's life that are required to report on a very ambiguous - and private- subject- gender and gender expression. The definition of “public school representative” is so broad, in fact, that parents, kids, volunteers or contractors that see a child for one day will be forced to act as informants whenever they learn of someone's gender dysphoria – the historical analogies abound, and the practical impact is horrifying.

This measure is categorizing all of these “representatives” together as one, but they are medical, academic, or otherwise involved. Representatives who contribute to the school in different capacities and impact a student's life differently. Therefore, this measure is not single-subject based on this language alone.

Furthermore, the broad definition of “public school” means that #142 will cover virtually all schools, including private schools – something that would almost certainly stun voters who think they're addressing only what happens in schools run by local school boards.

Last, and most important to me as the parent of a transgender minor, is the definition of “gender incongruence.” Not only does it combine gender and gender expression together when they may be different to everyone, it leans heavily on someone’s perception as the word “PERCEIVED” is used more than once. Sex is what is assigned at birth, gender is how someone identifies and gender expression is how they present to the outside world. How someone identifies in their gender is a very personal journey and decision a person makes and they get to choose how that is shared with the world.

Because gender expression is how someone shows up in the outside world, that can be anywhere from the clothes they wear to the haircut they have to the color they love. This initiative doesn’t draw a clear distinction between these, forcing students, teachers, parents, volunteers, etc. to make assumptions about a young person based on how they look and rumors they hear, and then report it. The result is censoring students and teachers and restricting an environment that’s supposed to be safe for them to learn and explore who they are.

In my family, where there are two cisgender and one transgender minors, this might mean reporting on more than one of my children for any number of reasons. One of my children loves brown and another loves pink. One keeps short hair and another very long. None of these factors is a determination of how they view their gender or express it, but may be PERCEIVED that way and activate a report. Not only is this invasive, it would be based on one person’s perception of my child, not on actual facts.

Censoring students and placing ambiguous responsibility on the already overburdened supports for our minor children is no disguise for the underlying nature of this measure. The true intent of this measure is to limit young people’s

privacy to learn about and understand their gender and sexuality on their own and come out to their parents, families, and community when they are ready.

Thank you for your time.

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