
Email to Senate Judiciary

Rob Watson <SAMLN@saom.memberclicks.net>
Reply-To: samrw@sammt.org
To: samks@sammt.org

Thu, Mar 16, 2023 at 9:58 AM

Hello SAM Legislative Network;

I could use your help in providing opposition to a bill that would seek to remove administrative discretion when it comes to discipline for students who engage in a physical altercation.

[HB450](#) passed the House by a large margin (70-30) and was heard in the Senate Judiciary, Wednesday at 9am. You can listen to the discussion and testimony from that committee [HERE](#).

To be clear, the bill has gone through some amendments and the language has been cleaned up to some extent.

If you have time to write a very short note to the **Senate Judiciary committee** in the next couple of days - it may be helpful. They will likely take action on the bill this week or early next, if not before.

If you do decide to write something, I have provided a couple of examples of testimony that you can use. **Please try to put in your own words.**

Dear Chair Regier and Members of Senate Judiciary Committee,

<Identify yourself, your location and your position. You can also identify how long you have worked in public education>

I am writing today to oppose HB450 as it exists in its current form.

<Options for the body of the email, choose one!>

The proposed language of the bill relates to self defense, physical altercations and discipline for students. However, the language has been misplaced in a current state law that prohibits bullying. This is the wrong place for this language. Not all physical altercations in schools are related to bullying.

The bill seeks to prohibit discipline for a student who engages in a physical altercation. A decision regarding school consequences is best left to local policy. Our locally elected school board has established policies regarding appropriate disciplinary consequences for these types of actions. We also have an appeal process for those families that disagree with an administrative decision. This process is best handled at the local level.

While I agree that addressing bullying is an important issue for schools, there are no solutions in this proposed bill that would help to address the issue of bullying. The bill language addresses potential consequences for students who are engaged in a physical altercation. How would that help to resolve bullying issues in schools? We have established programs and policies in place to address bullying issues in our school and this bill does nothing to help schools take a proactive approach to address bullying.

Please oppose this bill in its current form.

<Your name & title & school>

You can send an email to the entire committee using this link: <https://leg.mt.gov/web-messaging/>

Or you can send it to just one committee member using the list below.

Senate Judiciary Committee

Member	Assignment
Keith Regier (R) SD 3	Chair
Jen Gross (D) SD 25	Vice Chair
Barry Usher (R) SD 20	Vice Chair
Bob Brown (R) SD 7	Member
Daniel Emrich (R) SD 11	Member

Chris Friedel (R) SD 26	Member
Steve Hinebauch (R) SD 18	Member
Kathy Kelker (D) SD 24	Member
Theresa Manzella (R) SD 44	Member
Andrea Olsen (D) SD 50	Member
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