



# Congressman Jared Polis

2<sup>nd</sup> District, Colorado | 501 Cannon HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-2161

## H.R. 998 – 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

- ✓ African American Ministers In Action (AAMIA)
- ✓ American Association of University Women (AAUW)
- ✓ American Federation of Teachers
- ✓ American Civil Liberties Union
- ✓ American Counseling Association
- ✓ American Psychological Association
- ✓ American School Counselor Association
- ✓ Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
- ✓ The Episcopal Church
- ✓ Family Equality Council
- ✓ Friends Committee on National Legislation
- ✓ Gay-Straight Alliance Network
- ✓ GLAD (Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders)
- ✓ GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network)
- ✓ Human Rights Campaign
- ✓ Interfaith Alliance
- ✓ Lambda Legal
- ✓ Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
- ✓ NAACP

- ✓ National Association of School Psychologists
- ✓ National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officials
- ✓ National Association of Secondary School Principals
- ✓ National Center for Lesbian Rights
- ✓ National Center for Transgender Equality
- ✓ National Council of Jewish Women
- ✓ National Council of La Raza
- ✓ National Education Association
- ✓ National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
- ✓ National Women's Law Center
- ✓ PFLAG
- ✓ People for the American Way
- ✓ SAVE (Suicide Awareness Voices of Education)
- ✓ School Social Work Association of America
- ✓ Transgender Law Center
- ✓ The Trevor Project
- ✓ Unitarian Universalist Association
- ✓ United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society

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