



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 7882 • MADISON, WI 53707-7882

To: Assembly Committee on Education

From: Senator Mark Spreitzer, Chair of the Wisconsin Legislative LGBTQ+ Caucus

RE: Assembly Bill 103

Date: March 6, 2025

Chair Kitchens and committee members:

As Chair of the Wisconsin Legislative LGBTQ+ Caucus, I am submitting written testimony on behalf of caucus members in opposition to 2025 Assembly Bill 103. We ask that this testimony be shared with all members of the committee, and be entered into the committee record for this bill.

Assembly Bill 103 creates new procedural obstacles for students updating their school records to reflect a legal name change that has already been approved by a court. The bill would require that every district implement these obstacles, regardless of a district's current policy and/or the efforts made by local elected officials to best represent their district and the families who have students enrolled in it. We understand that this legislation is based on policies that some districts have adopted with the express intent to decrease LGBTQ+ representation in schools, but the fact that some districts have adopted a bad policy is not justification for expanding that policy and requiring that every district fall in line.

This bill puts forward a policy for updating school records that puts school boards on a course to deny updating records in spite of a court order legally changing the name of a student. There can be no justification for a school board denying the reality of a student's legal name for any reason. At the heart of this discussion is the fact that school records are key to every student's future, and a mismatch between the legal name of a student and their school records can cause confusion and hardship well beyond the time spent at a student's school. Rather than allowing a student to apply to college or apply for a job with a school transcript and diploma that match the legal name on their driver's license, AB 103 allows a school board to reject a student's new legal name. Whatever the reason is for a student changing their legal name – whether to distance themselves from an abusive parent whose last name they do not want or because they are a trans student whose gender identity does not align with their prior name or because they are updating their last name after their parents' divorce – we should be ensuring that school boards are helping those students be in the best position possible. This bill instead creates the distinct possibility that school boards will be forced to hold a hearing between parents who disagree about a name change a judge has already approved - with a student's records stuck in the middle.

This bill also goes beyond a student's formal records and tries to police everyday interactions between students and school staff. Through AB 103, the Legislature is trying to micromanage social interactions that are made in everyday life without great controversy. If a student has a nickname that they go by for literally any reason, school staff are now forced to ignore the individuality and personality of their



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students until a written authorization appears before them. The nickname policy in this bill is more restrictive than even some of the policies that it is based on and only allows nicknames based on a student's first or middle name to be used without authorization. Make the winning shot at the championship game and go by "Champ"? Better fill out a form. Have the last name Roberts and go by "Bobby"? Not without your form. The impact of this proposal would reach far beyond its intention - to further complicate school life for LGBTQ+ youth - and would result in awkwardness and absurdity across our state.

On behalf of the LGBTQ+ Caucus, I ask that you not schedule AB 103 for a vote. AB 103 takes the overly restrictive policies of a few districts and tries to impose them on every district in our state. If AB 103 comes before you for a vote in this Committee or on the Assembly floor, we ask that you vote no. This bill represents a micromanagement of local school districts and will not improve students outcomes. Instead of supporting this misguided bill, we hope that you will join us in telling transgender and nonbinary youth in our state that they are seen, they are loved, and that they belong here in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Mark Spreitzer

Mark Spreitzer

Chair, Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Caucus

State Senator, 15th Senate District