

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1142

As Passed House:

January 12, 1996

Title: An act relating to the questioning of students regarding personal beliefs and practices.

Brief Description: Prohibiting testing students regarding personal beliefs.

Sponsors: Representatives Lambert, Tokuda, Hymes, Carrell, Robertson, Quall, Mitchell, Smith, B. Thomas, L. Thomas, Backlund, Dyer, Thompson, Boldt, Chappell, Basich, Huff, Stevens, Sherstad, Schoesler, Casada and Padden.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/27/95, 2/14/95 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/7/95, 81-14;

Passed House: 1/12/96, 75-17.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Brumsickle, Chairman; Elliot, Vice Chairman; Johnson, Vice Chairman; Clements; Dickerson; G. Fisher; McMahan; Pelesky; Quall; Radcliff; Smith; Talcott; B. Thomas and Thompson.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Hatfield and Veloria.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: Parents have expressed concerns about school district staff asking questions of their children regarding the childrens' personal beliefs, or the personal beliefs of the childrens' families.

Current state regulation prohibits written or oral tests, questionnaires, surveys, or examinations to be used to elicit the personal beliefs or practices of a student or his parents as to sex or religion except with the written consent of a parent or guardian.

Summary of Bill: A school district employee or other individual under the auspices of a school district may not require a student to submit to a survey, test, questionnaire, or examination that elicits the personal beliefs or practices of a student or the student's parents or guardians as to sex, religion, political affiliations, or mental or psychological treatment, unless prior written consent has been obtained from a parent or guardian of the student.

If the student is emancipated or an adult, the prior written consent shall be obtained from the student.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Our students are being asked questions in school regarding their sexual activity, whether they have ever contemplated suicide, and other personal beliefs and practices. This is not appropriate, especially for younger students. It undermines moral values and puts inappropriate thoughts and ideas into the minds of our students. Something must be done to protect our students.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Lambert, prime sponsor; Sandy Vanderburg, citizen; and Sue Trout, citizen.