

SENATE RESOLUTION

8669

By Senators Pedersen, Litzow, Liias, Fain, Ranker, Nelson, Jayapal, Billig, Warnick, Dansel, Hill, Darneille, Rolfes, King, Rivers, Kohl-Welles, Mullet, Frockt, Conway, Cleveland, Becker, Fraser, McCoy, Hobbs, Hasegawa, Chase, Roach, McAuliffe, Hatfield, Keiser, and Habib

1 WHEREAS, On the National Day of Silence, many students take a vow
2 of silence to bring attention to the name calling, bullying, and
3 harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in
4 schools; and

5 WHEREAS, The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network
6 designates the third Friday of every April as the National Day of
7 Silence; and

8 WHEREAS, Hundreds of thousands of students at more than 8,000
9 schools have participated in the National Day of Silence in past
10 years; and

11 WHEREAS, The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network's 2013
12 National School Climate Survey illustrated the pervasive harassment
13 and victimization faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
14 students by documenting their experiences within the preceding
15 academic year; and

16 WHEREAS, Nearly 75 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
17 transgender students reported being verbally harassed by their peers
18 at school because of their sexual orientation, and more than 55
19 percent reported being verbally harassed because of their gender
20 expression; and

21 WHEREAS, 36 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
22 students reported being physically harassed by their peers at school

1 because of their sexual orientation, and over 20 percent
2 reported being physically harassed because of their gender
3 expression; and

4 WHEREAS, Over 15 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
5 transgender students reported being physically assaulted by
6 their peers at school because of their sexual orientation, and
7 more than 10 percent reported being physically assaulted because
8 of their gender expression; and

9 WHEREAS, Nearly 60 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
10 transgender students reported that they felt unsafe in school,
11 and nearly 30 percent reported missing at least one entire
12 school day in the preceding month because of safety concerns;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Transgender students were more likely than all
15 other students to report feeling unsafe at school because of
16 their gender expression; and

17 WHEREAS, According to the National Transgender
18 Discrimination Survey, those who expressed a transgender
19 identity or gender nonconformity while in grades K through 12
20 reported alarming rates of harassment, physical assault, and
21 sexual violence so severe that almost 15 percent of those
22 surveyed had to leave school; and

23 WHEREAS, Harassment because of sexual orientation or gender
24 expression has an impact on student academic performance, such
25 that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students who
26 experienced high levels of verbal harassment because of their
27 sexual orientation or gender expression reported a grade point
28 average nearly one-half grade lower than that of lesbian, gay,
29 bisexual, and transgender students who experienced low levels of
30 such harassment; and

31 WHEREAS, The presence of supportive staff contributed to a
32 range of positive survey indicators, including fewer reports of
33 missing school, fewer reports of feeling unsafe, greater
34 academic achievement, higher educational aspirations, and a
35 greater sense of school belonging; and

36 WHEREAS, The State of Washington has enacted a series of
37 laws to require school districts to prevent bullying,

1 harassment, and discrimination against students on the basis of
2 their sexual orientation and gender identity or expression; and

3 WHEREAS, Every child should be guaranteed an education free
4 from name calling, bullying, harassment, and discrimination,
5 regardless of his or her sexual orientation and gender identity
6 or expression;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State
8 Senate support the goals of the National Day of Silence, applaud
9 the young people who support their peers who have experienced
10 bullying and harassment by participating in the National Day of
11 Silence, and encourage schools and school districts around the
12 state to adopt and enforce policies that ensure a safe and
13 healthy learning environment for all students, teachers, and
14 other staff regardless of their sexual orientation or gender
15 identity or expression.

16 I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate,
17 do hereby certify that this is a true and
18 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8669,
19 adopted by the Senate
20 April 17, 2015

21 HUNTER G. GOODMAN
22 Secretary of the Senate