



February 2026

To: House Education Committee

Re: AAUW SUPPORTS HB1141-Discriminatory Practices in Public Schools

Dear Committee Members,

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. More than 700 community leaders are members in local AAUW branches around the state.

AAUW has led the fight for economic empowerment for women, and we have made progress over the years. Yet women continue to face barriers to reach our full potential. Education is key to overcoming these barriers, especially when the school environment is welcoming and accommodating to all students. Unfortunately, young girls, especially young girls of color, still face discriminatory issues, and measures are needed to bring these issues to the attention of school leadership and empower change.

HB1141 represents yet another step forward in recognizing and addressing discriminatory policies and processes that negatively impact protected groups. The bill prohibits publishing discriminatory advertisements, failing to adequately address harassment, or retaliating against those who oppose discriminatory practices or participate in investigations. Individuals aggrieved by such practices can file a charge with the Civil Rights Division.

For these reasons, AAUW urges your YES vote in committee and throughout the process of becoming law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden".

**Hon. Su Ryden**  
**AAUW Colorado Advocacy Director**

16699 E. Kentucky Ave.  
Aurora, CO 80017  
303.898.5797  
[suryden25@gmail.com](mailto:suryden25@gmail.com)

*American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.*

“And now, come to help me, an orphan. Put in my mouth persuasive words in the presence of the lion>”  
Esther C:24

Thank you, Madame Chair and the members of this committee for taking the time to hear my testimony concerning this House Bill 1141.

After multiple reviews of the text of this bill I must express my concerns and objections to it as it is currently written.

I am certain that the sponsors of this bill have honorable intentions in the creation of this bill as they try to protect certain individuals from discrimination.

However, this bill, as currently written, goes beyond protection of the individual and actually creates new forms of discrimination.

Under the guise of “non-discrimination” it allows new forms of discrimination against any person or persons who have beliefs contrary to the state’s definition of marriage, human sexuality or gender identify.

This bill, as it is currently written, infringes upon the free speech rights of those who disagree with these definitions.

I reference Paragraph 4 of the definitions which redefines the term, “Harassment”, to include almost any form of communication.

Verbal, Written, Pictorial, or Visual,

The only term not included is, “thought”, which I wonder if that is the next step is this attack on free

Speech rights??

What concerns me even further is the possible removal of any civil and reasonable debate. And that thoughts and opinions contrary to ones defined by the State become labeled as discriminatory.

That should be your fear as well, that you not legislate acceptable language and debate.

This would lead us down an Orwellian path of “newspeak”, where only State accepted speech is allowed and old traditional ideals and values are abandoned or even destroyed.

Think Bradbury’s Fahrenheit 451.

This legislation would limit free debate and discussion in those places of education where children should be challenged and encouraged to explore all ideas in their quest for the truth.

Finally, there is fiscal concern with the passing of this bill.

The language used in the definition has already been challenged in the courts and the Supreme Court of the Land has ruled against this Language multiple times before.

So, my question is how responsible is it for you as legislator’s, knowing you are facing a fiscal deficit this year and possibly in the future.

How responsible is it to move forward with legislation that will most certainly be challenged in the courts and require the State of Colorado to spend monies defending this legislation?

Thank you to the committee for taking time to hear my testimony!





Colorado Developmental  
Disabilities Council

To the members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Kristina Ericson and I am the Policy Director for the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council. The Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council is a federally-mandated, Governor-appointed council and state office that works to knock down systemic accessibility barriers so that Coloradans with disabilities can lead meaningful lives. We work to advise our state agencies, general assembly members, and congressional delegates on developing policies and rules that impact people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Council supports HB26-1141. We strongly support creating better pathways for students and staff to report, and act upon, discrimination in Colorado's schools. Despite the expansion of federal disability rights over the last four decades students with intellectual and developmental disabilities routinely face discrimination, exclusion, and the denial of services and supports in classrooms and school settings.

Disability rights are under attack across the nation, and critical anti-discrimination programs are actively being defunded, downsized, or cut. These cuts harm our students of all ages. Colorado is a national leader in disability rights, and today we have the opportunity to continue leading and set a positive example for other states around the nation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kristina Ericson, MSW, CPACC, ADAC  
Director of Policy  
Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council

## Testimony on Discrimination in Public Schools:

Thank you, House Representative Bacon and members of the Education Committee, for the opportunity to testify on HB26-1141: Discriminatory Practices in Public Schools. My name is Jaxon Hoskinson, the School Advocate with Inside Out Youth Services in Colorado Springs. Our organization is asking this committee to vote in favor of this bill, as it reaffirms our state's protections for students in protected classes in schools, but more importantly, provides a method of addressing the discrimination running rampant in our state.

In El Paso County alone, there are multiple school districts (including our largest districts of D11, D20, and D49) who have multiple policies in effect in their districts that violate *current* anti-discrimination protections in Colorado. Whether it is failing to address bullying and assault on the basis of gender identity or categorically barring transgender athletes from joining sports teams that align with their gender identity, it is common practice in Colorado to refuse, deny, and withhold students full and equal services, facilities, and accommodations on the basis of gender identity and expression.

Reaffirming these protections for transgender students is important, yes, but when recent legislation such as HB24-1039: Non-legal Name Changes goes ignored, it shows that words are not enough. That is why the inclusion of a clear complaint process, with timely and actionable steps facilitated by the Colorado civil rights commission, is critical to implement. This bill will ensure there is no longer than a 60 day window for an early mediation with commission involvement, will help students and families stand up for their rights more confidently and with better results. Please vote yes to add more enforcement mechanisms for the rights of all students in Colorado.

**House Education**

**02/26/2026 01:30 PM**

**HB26-1141 Discriminatory Practices in Public Schools**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
Yautra Aspen Gay Against Colorado Catholic Organization	<p>HB26-1141 presents a massive violation in freedom of speech and expression in K-12 and higher education. The bill defines "acts of discrimination based on disability, race, creed, sex, gender identity, and gender expression" as unlawful and specifies "grievance procedures" for students and employees who are accused of committing "acts of discrimination," including verbally professing their religious or sincerely held beliefs about human sexuality and marriage on public education K-12 or a higher education campus. The bill also empowers the Colorado Civil Rights Commission (the same commission that sued Jack Phillips in Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Civil Rights Commission (2018)) to file charges against schools and individuals who violate this law. The bill introduced a mediation procedure for resolving disputes, allowing 60 days for schools to rectify discriminatory behavior and mandates ongoing monitoring by the Commission for compliance. The bill also establishes the appointment of a Title VI coordinator to manage compliance with the Civil Rights Act.</p> <p>Under the guise of "nondiscrimination," the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act (CADA) actually discriminates against any person and public or private institution that expresses a belief about human sexuality or marriage that is contrary to the state definition. In practical terms, this bill would not permit student organizations at colleges or K-12 campuses to host speakers (such as Turning Point USA) or events to promote marriage as between one man and one woman or argue that gender and biological sex are the same thing and only two (male and female), which conform to one's biological sex assigned at birth. It also may restrict the ability of students at K-12 schools to participate in faith-based student clubs and organizations that profess a belief in human sexuality and marriage contrary to the state definition. Freedom of speech and expression are God-given rights protected by the First Amendment to the US Constitution, and HB26-1141 is woefully in violation of both.</p>
Margarita Nelson Against themselves	I believe this bill violates the freedom of speech and expression which are protected by the First Amendment. Students have a right to express themselves and defend their views defending human sexuality and marriage.
Jeralee Gonzalez For	Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,  I strongly support House Bill 26-1141.

<p>themselves</p>	<p>Students in Colorado public schools deserve clear, enforceable protections against discrimination. While anti-discrimination laws already exist, families often struggle to navigate inconsistent local complaint processes. HB26-1141 creates a uniform, transparent pathway through the Colorado Civil Rights Division so concerns are addressed fairly and consistently across the state.</p> <p>This bill is balanced. It encourages early mediation, gives schools 60 days to correct deficiencies, and focuses on resolution before punishment. It does not impose quotas or remove due process. Instead, it ensures accountability while respecting school governance structures.</p> <p>HB26-1141 reinforces the principle that access to public education must be full and equal for every student “ regardless of disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.</p> <p>Clear standards protect students. Clear processes protect schools. Accountability builds trust.</p> <p>I respectfully urge a yes vote on HB26-1141.</p> <p>Sincerely,                  Jeralee Gonzalez                  Woodland Park</p>
<p>jeany rush                  Against                  themselves</p>	<p>TO: House Education Committee                  RE: HB26-1141 Discrimination Practices in Public Schools                  SPONSORS: J. BACON, C. KOLKER, D. JENET                  FROM: JEANY RUSH, COLORADO CONSTITUENT 2-26-26                  VOTE: NO NO WAY TAKE THIS BILL FEED IT TO AN OUTHOUSE                  LADIES &amp; GENTS:                  OK This is outright offensive! I am so tired of the “racism” or other Discrimination Insinuations being slammed around the last several years!</p> <p>First, I am from another country, have relatives with blood from Philipines, Indians from Alaska, my German and European Families, and well, you get the picture! I have friends, who are black, white, gay, straight, pink, purple, whatever, AND NONE OF THEM APPROVE OF THE HARM BEING DONE TO OUR KIDS IN THE PUBLIC/MARXIST/ATTROCITIES CALLED SCHOOLS. It seems we are all paying for our own demise!</p> <p>Our current President, unlike the last auto-pen one, has signed several critical Executive Orders. They finally remove the SEL DEI and CRT mess from our organizations.</p>

	<p>It is no more right to discriminate against "White" as it is "Black" kids or people. I refuse to apologize for something I never did, to People I never did it to! Further, there were just as many slaves of all colors, and PS there are still today. About 30 to 50 Million or more People are are ENSLAVED in Trafficking today. 1/3 or more of those are children! This state does not even have the DECENCY TO PROPERLY PUNISH TRAFFICKERS, CHILD MUTILATORS, CHILD RAPISTS, AND YOU WANT ME TO BUY INTO THIS "FALSE" MESS? Give me a freaking break!</p> <p>Our schools should be teaching academics, not creating Social Justice Warriors over lies being taught our kids. Having kids go out and protest ICE for example, is Garbage, Stupid, UnAmerican, and criminal. I don't care what color etc. you are, this has gone too far, and you all have not got enough real work to do if this is what you waste our time thinking up. The Globalists want us divided so we can kill each other, so they don't have to do it, and so that they can get rid of 2/3 of us by 2030 " Their stated Goal at WEF Davos! Our schools allow sick counselors to counsel only THAT kids are in the wrong body!???? It is not discrimination to DEMAND THEY KEEP THEIR FILTHY HANDS OFF OF OUR KIDS, MINDS, BODIES, AND GET RID OF PORN BOOKS, AND THIS CONFLICT OF INTEREST! Add that they don't tell parents, because of the SICKO bills this body has passed. DISGUSTED AND OUTRAGED DON'T BEGIN TO DESCRIBE HOW I FEEL!</p>
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Chair Lukens, Vice Chair Martinez, Members of the Education Committee:

We are Jewish on Campus, a student-powered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization combating campus antisemitism nationwide. For over five years, we've served as the leading voice for Gen-Z Jews in the United States, advocating for Jewish students on all levels, from the campus quad to Capitol Hill.

Jewish on Campus strongly urges you to support *HB26-1141: Discriminatory Practices in Public Schools*.

A 2025 survey from the American Jewish Committee and Hillel International found that 42% of U.S. Jewish college students have experienced antisemitism during their time in school, up from 35% in 2024. While Jewish students have reported rising incidents of antisemitism on campus, they lack a clear and efficient process to access support from university administrations.

HB26-1141 requires all Colorado public institutions of higher education to designate a Title VI coordinator, ensuring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits race, color, and national origin discrimination in federally funded programs.

Since 2020, Jewish on Campus has filed five Title VI complaints with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Representing Jewish students across the country, we recognize the urgent need to ensure consistent enforcement of protections under Title VI nationwide.

HB26-1141 provides a clear contact for Colorado students experiencing national origin discrimination, including antisemitism. If passed, Colorado would become a leading state in ensuring university administrations are held accountable for providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students on campus.

If you would like to hear personal stories of antisemitic discrimination directly from Jewish college students, we are here as a resource.

Thank you, Representative Bacon and Senator Kolker, for introducing this critical legislation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Julia Jassey  
Co-Founder and CEO, Jewish on Campus

Chair Lukens, Vice Chair Martinez, Members of the Education Committee:

My name is Dariel U. González García, I am a graduate student at the University of Denver, and I am a proud Jew. I am a campus representative of Jewish on Campus, a student-powered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization combating campus antisemitism nationwide. For over five years, Jewish on Campus has served as the leading voice for Gen-Z Jews in the United States, advocating for Jewish students on all levels, from the campus quad to Capitol Hill.

I strongly urge you to support *HB26-1141: Discriminatory Practices in Public Schools*.

In Colorado institutions of higher education, antisemitism is a serious issue. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has found that there are some concerns regarding [campus conduct and hostilities](#) from student groups and faculty toward Jewish students at the University of Colorado, Boulder. In addition, in its report card for universities across the United States, it gave my university—[the University of Denver](#)—a “C” letter grade for its handling of antisemitic incidents on campus. Thus, there is a lot for higher education institutions to improve on when it comes to supporting Jewish students like me on campus.

After October 7th, with the subsequent spike of antisemitism, I felt the need to hide. Classmates were constantly making comments saying that Jews were “genocide-sympathizers,” “baby killers,” and that the only reason that Israel was in a war against Hamas was to “prevent the rebirth of Jesus.” These invoke the classic antisemitic tropes of blood-libel and deicide which have been responsible for the death of Jews throughout history.

HB26-1141 requires all Colorado public institutions of higher education to designate a Title VI coordinator, ensuring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits race, color, and national origin discrimination in federally funded programs.

HB26-1141 provides a clear contact for Colorado students experiencing national origin discrimination, including antisemitism. If passed, Colorado would become a leading state in ensuring university administrations are held accountable for providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students on campus.

Jewish students, and all students, in Colorado need measures to protect us from national origin discrimination. We have suffered incredibly throughout the last two years, and this legislation would be paramount to our safety and inclusion on campus.

Thank you, Representative Bacon and Senator Kolker, for introducing this critical legislation.

Thank you for your consideration,

**Dariel Uriel González García | אוריאל יהודה**

International Studies | Graduate Student

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