

**To: House Education Committee**

**From: Rex Putnam High School's Unity Club (Clackamas County) with support from Vibrant Future Coalition**

**Re: House Bill 2631. Prescribes notification requirements for school district upon receipt of report of act of harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyberbullying.**

**Date: April 1, 2021**

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the committee;

We are members of Unity Club at Rex Putnam High School in Milwaukie, Oregon. This club is the similar to a Gay Straight Alliance, where we offer a safe space for people to be themselves and find ways to support one another. We are asking for your support on HB 2631, which would require schools to communicate with parents if their child is being bullied, harassed, intimidated or cyberbullied. This bill is important to us because many of us have experienced bullying firsthand or have friends that have been bullied. Here is one of our stories.

When I was younger I was terrified of going to school, no one cared if I was safe. The only thing I remember from elementary school was hiding away and some of the less physical bullying. In elementary school I was bullied for being a chubby kid. Once I got into middle school and came out as transgender and pansexual I was bullied for that. Until I was 14 years old the bullying went on. I would cry when I was at home. My teachers did nothing but tell me to stay away from the bullies. I used to go home with many bruises and cuts. Near the end of my freshman year, my older sister was in my math class and she saw me getting bullied. She told our parents and they called the school. The school removed the bully from all my classes.

HB 2631 would provide clear communication to the parents of children who are bullied so they can take appropriate action before it gets out of hand. This bill has the ability to save the lives of children and youth who live their lives feeling alone and scared due to the bullying they've endured. We urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Unity Club at Rex Putnam High School

*\*\* This letter was written with the help of Vibrant Future Coalition during their weekly afterschool club. Vibrant Future Coalition is a coalition in North Clackamas and East Multnomah Counties that strives to educate and create community-wide change in order to reduce youth substance use and promote positive life skills for youth in our community.*