

Stop Bullying for All Students

School Violence Prevention Act

Bill Purpose

The School Violence Prevention Act would require local school systems to adopt strong, clear policies against bullying and harassment for all students. The bill contains critical language enumerating categories of students that are often targeted, including physical appearance, race, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.

Why It Matters

Bullying that goes unaddressed also contributes to more severe violence, like school shootings. The U.S. Secret Service has documented that a history of bullying was a factor in most school shootings in recent years.

Physical appearance, sexual orientation, and gender identity are the three most frequent reasons cited for bullying and harassment in schools, yet these types of bullying are often overlooked by school personnel.

Students from schools with enumerated bullying and harassment policies report that they and others are less often harassed in school because of their physical appearance (36% versus 52%) and sexual orientation (32% versus 43%).*

Students from schools with enumerated policies are more likely to feel very safe at school (54% versus 36%) and one-third less likely to skip a class because they felt uncomfortable or unsafe (5% versus 16%).**

The School Violence Prevention Act would protect ALL students from bullying, and its inclusion of enumerated categories will provide clear direction to teachers, administrators, and students about the scope of the law.

An overwhelming majority of North Carolinians (72%), across party lines, support an anti-bullying bill with a provision to specifically protect children from bullying based on their sexual orientation.***

* Harris Interactive. "From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in North Carolina," 2006

** Harris Interactive. "From Teasing to Torment," (Nationwide), 2005

***Public Policy Polling. "Bullying Bill Poll," 2008

Supporters of the School Violence Prevention Act Include

Action for Children NC

ACLU-NC

Alliance of Disability
Advocates

The Arc of NC

Children First of Buncombe
County

Covenant with North
Carolina's Children

Equality NC

State Public Affairs

Committee of the Junior
League of North Carolina

NAACP—NC Conference of
Branches

National Association of Social
Workers NC

NC Coalition Against
Domestic Violence

NC Association of Educators

NC Council of Churches

NC Foster and Adoptive
Parents' Association

NC Justice Center

NC National Organization for
Women

NC Women United

Planned Parenthood of
Central NC

El Pueblo

Say So, Inc.