

Alabama Bill Applauded for Protecting Vulnerable Children, Parental Rights

AFA Action celebrates the passage of legislation in Alabama that will protect schoolchildren when they go to the bathroom. Sponsored by Rep. Scott Stadthagen, HB 322 requires students to use multiple-occupancy bathrooms and changing areas according to their biological sex. The bill was amended by the Alabama Senate to require that any instruction regarding sexual orientation and gender identity be age appropriate for children in kindergarten through fifth grade (roughly ages 5 to 10).

“This is a commonsense bill to protect the privacy rights of all students. HB 322 balances the rights of students to use the bathroom according to their biological sex while allowing other students to use single-occupancy bathrooms and locker rooms,” said Walker Wildmon, CEO of AFA Action. “Young girls don’t feel safe anymore when they go to the bathroom at school. This is tragic, unhealthy and bad for their education and self-esteem.”

Cases of school bathroom rapes are on the rise, according to the sponsor of the bill. In a well-publicized case in Virginia, a 14-year-old biological male claiming to be “gender fluid” sexually assaulted two girls in two different incidents, forcibly raping and sodomizing one of the girls in a public school bathroom while he was “wearing a skirt.”

“Setting a clear standard so that all students know they can go to the bathroom without fear of being assaulted is a fair policy that serves all students,” said Wildmon. “Failing to provide this basic guarantee of safety and comfort infringes upon the academic rights of vulnerable students who fear they

can't even go to the bathroom in peace.

"We strongly support the Senate amendment. Parents in Alabama deserve age-appropriate instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity for their children. Kids in these early grades are not ready to be exposed to explicit sexual indoctrination and content. Parents— not schools—have the right to decide when their kids are ready to have 'the talk.' Requiring age-appropriate instruction will protect students and teachers from confusion and controversy. It's commonsense."

Wildmon added, "This bill is worth the fight. The federal 11th Circuit Court of Appeals has already signaled it may uphold a similar policy by a Florida school district. Passing HB 322 sends a strong message to the courts that these protections are necessary to balance the rights of the vast majority of students against the rights of others whose preferences are accommodated by single-occupancy restrooms and changing areas. The Senate amendment is also a necessary step to protect parental rights in Alabama. We are looking forward to seeing Gov. Kay Ivey sign this important bill." {eo}

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