

HB 120

Hello, Chairman Mortimer and members of the committee.

My name is Donna Yule, and I'm the President of the SW Idaho Chapter of the National Organization for Women. I am here to speak in opposition to House Bill 120.

The theme of the 2019 Legislature seems to be Why Fix it if it ain't broken? This bill is a perfect example. There is nothing wrong with our current system of asking parents who object to sex education for their children to opt out. There is a lot wrong with asking the large percentage of parents who understand and value the importance of sex education to opt in.

Most of NOW's members are mothers and grandmothers. I raised three sons in Idaho, and I now have five grandchildren, three of whom are attending school in Boise. My guess is that some of you are parents. I remember what it was like when I had three teenage sons in my house, and I see the same thing at my son's house where he has three teenagers. It is barely controlled chaos.

Asking all those parents to sign yet another form, and one that is unnecessary, and make sure it gets returned to the teacher is just silly. We all know how easy it is for a form to get lost, or not make it home in the first place.

We all know that some parents, even the very best parents, don't always adequately teach their children about sex. Maybe that is because they are uncomfortable having the discussion, or, more likely, that the sex talk gets lost in the busy schedule of ball games, concerts, and all the other activities kids have.

However, those parents who have a truly held religious belief that leads them to believe sex education is bad, will have no problem remembering to fill out a form for their children to opt out of sex education.

Passage of this bill will mean that many children, those whose parents would have no objection to sex education classes, will be denied sex education simply because this body decided to add another piece of bureaucracy to our already busy lives.

Statistics show that when children have factual sex education, teenage pregnancies and teenage abortions decline. That alone should be enough reason to want all of our Idaho children to have access to a good sex education program.

I ask you to vote against House Bill 120.

Thank you.