

# Sen. Baldwin: Introduces Student Non-Discrimination Act

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*Legislation would help protect public school students from bullying, harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity*

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin introduced the *Student Non-Discrimination Act* (SNDA), which would help protect public school students from bullying, harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

The *Student Non-Discrimination Act* is more necessary than ever, as the Departments of Education and Justice - under the guidance of President Trump, his Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and his Attorney General Jeff Sessions - rescinded Obama Administration guidance on the rights of transgender students and refuses to investigate cases of discrimination against transgender students.

“Congress must make absolutely clear that every student, including LGBTQ youth, must have access to an education free from discrimination, harassment and bullying,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “As multiple federal courts of appeals have recognized, current law is properly understood to protect these young people. But with the Trump Administration walking back the federal government’s commitment to equality, it is critical that Congress act to eliminate any doubt and ensure these students are protected from discrimination.”

A national study of adolescents in grades 7 - 12 found that lesbian, gay and bisexual youth were more than twice as likely to have attempted suicide as their

heterosexual peers. Further, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, negative attitudes toward LGBT youth put these students “at increased risk for experiences with violence, compared with other students.”

The legislation was also introduced in the House by Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO), Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA). Numerous advocacy groups locally and nationally have championed the *Student Non-Discrimination Act*.

“At a time when the Trump administration has chosen to turn its back to LGBT students, it’s more important than ever for Members of Congress to step up. The ACLU applauds Representatives Polis, Ros-Lehtinen, Scott and Takano, as well as Senator Baldwin, for today’s introduction of the Student Non-Discrimination Act. No student in our nation’s public elementary and secondary schools should ever be denied a quality education because of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. This legislation will help to ensure that our public schools are places where every student, including those who are LGBT, can learn and thrive,” **said Ian Thompson, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)**.

“Every child in this country has a right to feel safe in their school. The Student Non-Discrimination Act (SNDA) would provide crucial protections against discrimination for LGBTQ young people, one of the most vulnerable groups in our community. We thank Senator Tammy Baldwin and Representatives Jared Polis, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Mark Takano and Bobby Scott for their leadership on this issue and being champions of equality for all people,” **said David Stacy, Human Rights Campaign (HRC)**.

In the Senate, the *Student Non-Discrimination Act* is cosponsored by Senators Michael Bennet (D-CO), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tom Carper (D-DE), Bob Casey (D-PA), Christopher Coons (D-DE), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala D. Harris (D-CA), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Doug Jones (D-AL), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Jack Reed (D-RI), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Tina Smith (D-MN), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Tom Udall (D-NM), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH).



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