

SAFE SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT ACT



Bill Number

Reintroduced in the House as H.R.1957 by Rep. Linda T. Sanchez (CA-38).

Purpose of Bill

SSIA will instruct school districts to implement a comprehensive anti-bullying policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity, and will require states to include bullying and harassment data in the surveys conducted statewide to distinguish what needs are unmet in their schools.

Action Request

Ask your Members of Congress to support this bill, especially if they serve on the House Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. If they are not a cosponsor of the bill, ask them to become a co-sponsor.

Talking Points

- **Bullying and harassment harm children in our nation's schools.** According to GLSEN's National School Climate Survey, high numbers of LGBT students report regular anti-LGBT behavior along with feeling unsafe at school. Yet only 18 states and the District of Columbia have comprehensive legislation that protects students against anti-LGBTQ bullying and harassment.
- **Comprehensive anti-bullying and harassment policies work.** Enumerated (i.e. specifically naming sexual orientation and gender identity or expression) anti-bullying policies are the most effective at addressing anti-LGBTQ and bias-based bullying.
- **The bill cultivates respect which will create safer schools.** Research shows that bullying and harassment are serious problems that impede students' academic progress and overall mental health. The bill provides language ensuring that all students have a safe learning environment which helps reduce the nation's growing dropout rate.