



Written by [James Murphy](#) on February 6, 2024

Iowa Bill Would Protect Teachers Who Don't Use "Preferred Pronouns"

The Iowa state legislature recently advanced a proposal that would prohibit schools from taking disciplinary action against teachers who do not use a student's so-called preferred pronouns. The use of these "preferred pronouns" is a hot-button issue, particularly in the transgender and non-binary communities, and some consider incorrect pronouns usage tantamount to violence against a transgendered person.

But [House File 2139](#) in Iowa would prohibit punishing school personnel for not using so-called preferred pronouns. The bill was moved forward out of a subcommittee on Monday and will next go to the House Education Committee.



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Specifically, the bill "prohibits the board of directors of school districts and the governing boards of charter schools from taking any disciplinary action against an employee, contractor or student for failing to disclose or use any personal pronouns in the greeting or signature block of any form of official communication."

Opponents of the bill complain that it's a solution in search of a problem.

"We are not aware of any school district that is currently punishing an education professional or a student for using the wrong pronouns," said Melissa Peterson, a lobbyist for the Iowa' state teacher's union, the Iowa Education Association. "If we truly think there are problems, let's address them at the local level, not create further problems and complications at the legislative level."

But proponents of the proposed legislation claim that it protects those who object to the current pronoun craze from intimidation from woke school districts and transgender extremists.

"It just makes sense," said Ryan Benn of The Family Leader, a pro-family group. "It protects teachers of the faith."

"They want to be able to not violate their conscience when doing their job," Benn added.

The National Education Association, of which the Iowa Education Association is an affiliate, claims that correct pronoun use offers protection and safety for transgender youth.

"Pronouns affirm gender identities and create safe spaces by referring to people in the way that feels most accurate to them," The NEA's website [asserts](#).

"When correct names and pronouns are used, statistics show that suicide rates drop, while trust and feelings of belonging increase," NEA also claims.

Even the U.S. government argues that misuse of pronouns, commonly referred to as "misgendering," is



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a civil-rights issue.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), a federal government agency, [describes](#) the issue: “Gender pronouns are a way for individuals to identify themselves outside of using their names. Pronouns are important not only because they are used for everyday communication, but also because they are used to convey and affirm gender identity, especially for [sexual and gender minority] communities.”

“Intentional refusal to use someone’s correct pronouns is equivalent to harassment and a violation of one’s civil rights,” NIH further asserts.

Given that sort of governmental and union advocacy on the issue of pronouns, some Iowa legislators feel they need to offer protections for employees who simply don’t ascribe to the ludicrous and unscientific notion that a person can simply change his gender.



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