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faithslaw.org
LD 2192

My name is Faith Colson, and I am representing myself as I provide support for LD 2192. I am writing as a policy expert and survivor of educator sexual abuse.

When I was 17 years old, my high school physics teacher groomed, abused, and assaulted me. Years later, I made a criminal report, and he was convicted, but sadly, most cases of educator sexual misconduct do not result in criminal charges and therefore would not show up in a background check. LD 2192 would help close this gap to ensure that histories of sexual misconduct are not concealed.

Hiring schools need to know if an applicant has acted in a way that endangers a child so that they do not unknowingly bring a danger into their community. Screening applicants for a history of sexual misconduct helps prevent opportunities for re-offenses. I worked on similar legislation in my home state of Illinois, in what became known as Faith's Law.

It's important that states clearly define misconduct at the state level and require local schools to have codes of conduct so that all school community members understand appropriate boundaries. Outside reporting of abuse and criminal actions to law enforcement and child protective services are needed for transparency and accountability. Good faith reports and fair investigations protect all members of the school community.

The vast majority of educators would never harm a student, but those who do can create a lifetime of destruction. It's up to bystanders to notice and report boundary violations and misconduct so that children are protected.