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LD 2192

I am writing to oppose LD 2192 - An Act to Protect Students by Ensuring Schools Have Complete Information About School Employees and Applicants for Employment. This measure tramples on the rights of individuals who have been accused of criminal acts but have been exonerated from those accusations. Convictions are a serious matter, but anybody can make an accusation with absolutely no grounding in fact.

Many years ago, I worked for an agency which assisted vulnerable adults, one of whom accused a co-worker of a serious sexual crime. The agency took swift action to protect the accuser while the charges were investigated by three separate agencies. The investigations caused a lot of pain for the co-worker, but they were a thorough examination of the facts, and were conducted fairly and professionally. The investigations completely exonerated the co-worker, who returned to normal work duties. Forcing that employee to report this allegation in every future employment application would subject him to unfair scrutiny. He did nothing but perform his duties appropriately, yet a future employer could easily choose to consider another applicant more favorably because of a situation over which the applicant had no control. In today's job market, this accusation could linger for a lifetime and cause loss of advancement opportunities.

We must always protect vulnerable adults and children, but LD 2192 is not the way to accomplish this.