

Good afternoon, Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, members of the committee. My name is Gina Tansey, and I am here this afternoon to ask you to support LD 254: An Act to Update the Sex Education & Consent Curriculum.

To me, access to high quality, comprehensive sex education is important because our culture does so much to sell goods and services by sexualizing them, that our young people and even adults are getting bad information about the nature and importance of healthy relationships.

I was offered sex ed in the context of my church youth group where we were given information. I learned that no birth control is 100% reliable, that unprotected intercourse can lead to pregnancy, and/or infections. I learned that I was not interested in the risks of having sex as a teen, and ultimately delayed becoming active until I was an adult. I also never had an unplanned pregnancy.

Thanks to this supportive environment, I gained accurate information about the physical nature of sex and a few things about developing my own personal values around being sexually active. That sex should be pleasurable and perhaps only shared between people who love each other. That unplanned pregnancy would derail my plans and my goals.

I would have benefitted from more information about what constitutes consent, and how to have conversations that defined and protected my safety around consent. Guided conversations might have helped me to better value myself and my body and know how to share pleasure with a partner without risking my/our physical or emotional safety.

LD 254 will ensure that our educators have access to the support & resources they need to provide the best quality of sex education to our young people, including skills on navigating consent & safety. I'm sure you will each agree that knowledge is power, and our educators deserve our support in empowering their students to reach their goals.

Please vote "ought to pass" on LD 254.

Thank you for your time & attention.