

Testimony of Ron Richard
Coventry, RI
in Opposition to House Bill No. 5688
An Act Relating to Health and Safety – Parents Bill of Rights Act
Before the House Committee on Education
March 29, 2023

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the House Committee on Education.

My name is Ron Richard. I live in Coventry and I am the President of the **Greater Providence Chapter of PFLAG**. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify today. For those of you who are unfamiliar with **PFLAG**, we are parents, family, friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and non-binary people. The Greater Providence Chapter is just one of over 400 chapters across the U.S. and abroad of PFLAG National, the largest grassroots based family organization of its kind.

Through our core values of meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG seeks to realize our vision through a three-prong approach of:

- Supporting families, allies and people who are LGBTQ.
- Educating ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges faced by those who are LGBTQ.
- Advocating in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

Today I am writing in opposition to House Bill No. 5688. There is no dispute that parents have a right to be involved in their child's education. However, educators need to have the flexibility to teach subjects without everyone looking over their shoulder for approval. This Bill is an overreach of a parent's right to control what is taught in a classroom simply based on their personal beliefs and, therefore, hamstringing both educators and school administrators in performing their job efficiently and effectively.

Because of the significant negative impact this Bill would have on our educational system, I strongly urge you to oppose House Bill 5688.

Thank you for your time.