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## **Official Report of Debates (Hansard)**

**Tuesday 8 May 2012**

## **Journal des débats (Hansard)**

**Mardi 8 mai 2012**

**Standing Committee on  
Social Policy**

Accepting Schools Act, 2012

Anti-Bullying Act, 2012

**Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Loi de 2012 pour  
des écoles tolérantes

Loi de 2012 sur la lutte  
contre l'intimidation

Chair: Ernie Hardeman  
Clerk: Katch Koch

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
SOCIAL POLICY**

Tuesday 8 May 2012

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DE  
LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE**

Mardi 8 mai 2012

*The committee met at 1605 in committee room 1.***ACCEPTING SCHOOLS ACT, 2012**  
**LOI DE 2012 POUR  
DES ÉCOLES TOLÉRANTES****ANTI-BULLYING ACT, 2012**  
**LOI DE 2012 SUR LA LUTTE  
CONTRE L'INTIMIDATION**

Consideration of the following bills:

Bill 13, An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to bullying and other matters / Projet de loi 13, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation en ce qui a trait à l'intimidation et à d'autres questions.

Bill 14, An Act to designate Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week in Schools and to provide for bullying prevention curricula, policies and administrative accountability in schools / Projet de loi 14, Loi désignant la Semaine de la sensibilisation à l'intimidation et de la prévention dans les écoles et prévoyant des programmes-cadres, des politiques et une responsabilité administrative à l'égard de la prévention de l'intimidation dans les écoles.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** We'll call the meeting to order, the May 8 committee meeting of the social policy committee. We're having hearings on Bill 13 and Bill 14. This is our second day of having public hearings.

**MS. LINDA BEAUDOIN**

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Our first delegation is Linda Beaudoin. I believe she's already at the microphone, ready to go here.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Yes. Hello.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for being here. We would ask you, first of all, to identify yourself as you start your presentation. You will be allotted 15 minutes to make your presentation. At the end of the presentation, if there's sufficient time, we will have questions from the committee. If there's sufficient time to divide it into three parties, we'll do that; if not, we will let one party have the questions, and then we'll rotate that through the delegations.

With that, we turn the floor over to you. Again, thank you for coming.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** On a point of order first: Chair, we have a binder here. Is this from the committee?

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Yes.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch):** It's from the ministry.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's from the ministry. Okay. I was just wondering why Bill 14 wasn't included in it. Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much. The floor is yours.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Thank you for giving me this opportunity. My name is Linda Beaudoin. I'm an advocate for children's rights, and facilitate survivors of child abuse.

I am the founder of the websites survivorsspeakout.com, healtoreel.com and survivorsinsolidarity.com.

Survivorsspeakout.com is a website with members who advocate for children's and victims' rights. Members are survivors of child abuse and supporters. Some members have organizations and foundations, or volunteer their time to speak out on behalf of children's rights.

I am here today because I oppose Bill 13.

I will share my own experience regarding bullying. Bullying is not just about whether you are in a minority group, gender or race; there are many factors that lead to bullying. There is a need to educate on the topic of abuse, what abuse is. There are many types of abuse: verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, mental abuse, spiritual abuse, threats and harassment. The list is long. Bullying is a type of abuse. There are possibilities that the child that is the aggressor—the bully—may be in an abusive environment. We need to get to the root of the problem and educate on the topic of abuse.

I, being a survivor of incest, child abuse, domestic violence, rape and bullying, can say I have first-hand knowledge of what abuse is. We as a society need to all be involved in preventing abuse and put a stop to aggression.

There is never any excuse for abuse, yet when it occurs there are many factors. Children are very susceptible to their environment. That is a reason why we must not impose agendas that are inappropriate for them, such as the curriculum in Bill 13. To introduce children to the LGBT agenda at young ages and grades and to have sex

clubs in schools is a violation of children's rights. Sex clubs in schools for children goes beyond what the government should be imposing on children, as all children must have a right to experience their childhood at their own pace. The government has no place to legislate a law such as Bill 13 that encourages imposing adult agendas on the child. It infringes on the rights of children to be children.

Children should not be indoctrinated into a program which promotes the LGBT agenda. Many laws are needed to protect children. The development of a child's sexuality should never be the government's mandate. Bill 13 denies the child's right to develop at the child's own pace.

My story is, when I was at high school, grade 9, at Sir Wilfrid Laurier in Ottawa, female students ganged up on me in the stairways of the school. They would threaten me and call me names. On my way home, I was thrown to the ground by one girl, and when she was on top of me, she spat in my face. I never told anyone; there was no one I could speak to. Why did this happen? Because she was angry. Her boyfriend would say hi to me. The reason here was jealousy.

There are many excuses used for bullying. Some are if you are unattractive, disfigured, overweight, small, shy, or challenged. The excuses are endless, yet there is never—no—excuse for abuse.

#### **1610**

When I was bullied at school, I dropped out of school. I did not have support or guidance. All these things in my life that led me to abuse throughout my life were because I was not aware I had rights and I was uneducated about what abuse was. I did not recognize it. We need to educate children of what abuse is. This is a big problem in our society. Developing a curriculum that explains what abuse is is vital in saving lives. It does not matter what reason someone is bullied for. We must educate what abuse is and that there is never an excuse for abuse. Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your presentation. We have a few minutes for questioning. We'll start with the third party.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Linda, thank you very much for being here today.

I think virtually every person who's come to us and spoken about this issue has spoken from the heart, spoken about an issue that's deeply emotionally charged. I'm concerned about your referring to a support group for kids who are oppressed because of their gender orientation as a sex club. I just urge you to rethink that, because I've dealt with a lot of high school students who give each other support for a variety of difficulties. I would say that it's far more accurate to characterize a GSA meeting, gay-straight alliance, as a place where kids who are facing common problems get together to try to solve them, much as children who are dealing with disabilities are, in this bill, urged to get together and talk about those problems. Can you tell me why you see it very differently?

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Well, that means there should be a club in the school—because the core root of everything is abuse. Bullying is a form of abuse. That's what we should focus on, not if somebody—unless you want to have clubs for every single thing, a club for people with disabilities, to me—

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** That's actually in the legislation.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Yes?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Yes.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Okay. Well, I just think that we should focus, more so, on what abuse is. People need to be educated. Children need to know what abuse is, because without education, people will be revictimized and they will not know what abuse is. They won't recognize it. It needs to be taught in school what abuse is.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I actually would agree with you. I think we do need to talk to kids about what abuse is and where they can go for help. We need to provide the help to them. I'm glad that's something that we're on the same wavelength on.

I just see that there are groups of kids—because I've talked to young South Asian kids who have been beaten up by non-South Asian kids because of the colour of their skin. I know gay kids who have been harassed really heavily not for any reason other than that they weren't overtly, sharply macho in the way they carried themselves. I would think that, given what you've had to say, you could see why that sort of approach needs to be supported, that we need to support children who are dismissed as a group, not just as individuals.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Yes. I think that there needs to be the focus on what abuse is, all the different types of abuse. Bullying is just one form of abuse.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It is one form.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Yes.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Okay. I have no further questions. Thank you, Linda.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much. We'll now go to the government side. Mr. Flynn.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you, Linda, for your presentation today. Some of the things you came forward with were things I don't think you'd get any argument from anybody around this table on. Where I kind of lose you a little bit, and I'd ask you to expand, is what we should do about it.

The intent of Bill 13 and Bill 14, I think, is to address a problem that we're seeing in our schools far too often. In your case, in your experience, it was because somebody was jealous and physically abused you. There are a number of other reasons that it's happening, and one of those reasons is because a young person may be lesbian or gay and perhaps they're from a different culture or perhaps they are not the right gender or perhaps they came from the wrong country.

It seems to me—you refer to something in here; you refer to the curriculum part of the legislation that's envisioned by Bill 13, and Bill 14 I think as well, and that somehow this leads to a change in the curriculum in the province of Ontario. I don't see that in the bill, and I was

wondering what part of the bill would make you think that—if you could point out what part of the bill makes you think that somehow this would lead to a change in what young people are taught about sex education, for example.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Was there not proposed clubs for LGBT, those clubs?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I don't want to put words in your mouth or I don't want to change your understanding of this—well, actually, I do want to change your understanding of this. If a child is bullied, if a student is bullied, they can go to the principal and say, "I'm being bullied because of X, Y or Z," whatever it is. The principal, then, or the school community is obliged to support that student in perhaps setting up a meeting, setting up a club perhaps, to talk about whatever the difference is. Maybe they're being bullied because they are Christian or they are being bullied because they came from the West Indies or they are being bullied because they are gay.

What the school would do in that case—my understanding of the bill is that we get those students who are interested in maybe learning a little bit more about the person, about the other side, whatever the issue is, and I don't think there's any intent—my understanding is there's no intent to focus on any one particular issue. I think the intent is to get to the reason that's causing the bullying in the first place. You seem to think that somehow it takes it much further than that, and that's the part I don't understand.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** No, that was my understanding of it.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** You can still correspond with the committee afterwards, after this is over, and if you could point that out to me, I'd be obliged.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Sure.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much. We'll now go to the official opposition. Ms. MacLeod.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thanks very much, Linda. I speak, I think, with all of my colleagues of your courage to come here today, not only to speak to us but also tell us the horrific instances you had, not only of bullying but also of incest and that you're a survivor. For that, we appreciate that. It's never easy to come before a legislative committee and talk about legislation using the same types of words that an MPP might use, or a lawyer, and I congratulate you for coming here and sharing your views.

I'd just reiterate to everyone here that, you know, we're not all going to agree all the time, and it's important that people come here, regardless of their views, and share them. I just wanted to say thank you for coming, wish you well and see if you had any parting thoughts on what we might be able to do to improve the situation of bullying in our communities and in our schools.

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much, and that concludes it. We thank you very much for your presentation—

**Ms. Linda Beaudoin:** I just wanted to add, I have concerns about young children. Their minds are very fragile, and so we need to be cautious how we approach different things with children, you know.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much. I'm sure the committee will keep that in mind. Thank you for your presentation.

#### NETWORK OF FAMILIES' CONCERN

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Next is the Network of Families' Concern: Luvy Avila and Lynn Jackson.

As you are finding your seat there, thank you very much for joining us this afternoon to participate in these hearings. We very much appreciate that. We will have 15 minutes for your presentation. You can use any or all of that 15 minutes in your presentation. If there's sufficient time left at the end, as we did with the last delegation, we will allow the parties to ask some questions they may have about your presentation.

So thank you very much again, and the floor is yours.

**Ms. Lynn Jackson:** My name is Lynn Jackson, and I'm part of a large network of various ethnic communities and churches, faith groups across the city. I'm also a mother and I have two adopted grandchildren. I also thank the committee for your time and your attention. It's my belief that politicians must go into this job because they want to improve society, so thank you.

#### 1620

Two days ago, I spoke with a friend who has identified herself as gay—a good friend—and she told me that she can talk with anyone about any issue as long as there is mutual respect. So I am hoping that these meetings are not just a formality. We really need to talk about these issues openly and honestly, because we do not understand the reasoning of the government in wanting to pass or amend such a controversial bill as this in the face of all the arguments against it and in light of the perfectly good, adequate and excellent anti-bullying Bill 14, which covers everyone.

We do not want to see gay students hurt or marginalized—I have seen my own daughter abused, hurt, and I know the pain of a parent seeing that happen—nor do I want other children to be hurt or marginalized. No one is better or more deserving than anyone else.

My friend, who I told you is gay, does not agree with Bill 13 because she understands that forcing people into situations that they don't agree with or don't feel comfortable with will not promote goodwill or understanding—rather, distrust, resentment and even hatred. For us, this is not about politics. This is about speaking to people, face to face, as parents and fellow citizens who care about Canada.

We've been speaking to politicians in all parties, and there are many secret concerns behind closed doors that

have been expressed. I spoke with Andrea Horwath myself during the last election, and she told me that she does not believe parents should be kept in the dark about these issues. But they have been kept in the dark. Most people do not know about the policy and the effect on curriculum. This is one of the reasons why we are opposed to Bill 13—because there have been many abuses to the way it has been implemented or the policy is being used.

Equity teams are now going school to school. I know of one school in North York where equity teams went and the staff was pressured into starting a gay-straight alliance before the bill has even passed. They were told that if a student volunteer does not come up, then the principal or vice-principal will be required to pick one. The school is intimidated to even be named. This is one example.

And yes, there is a link between curriculum and the bill. We have seen the TDSB and how they have implemented the equity and inclusive policy; how the government's equity and inclusive policy is being used to apparently support this curriculum, not allowing parents to remove their children from classes that promote LGBTTIQ lifestyles. Yet we can get notes home about Halloween.

The bill requires implementation of a policy, and the policy states: to “affirm experiences” related to sexual orientation. That policy is implemented through the learning environment—i.e., curriculum. Following this logic, how does the bill not influence curriculum?

Why is this curriculum so dangerous, and why are we opposed to the bill that supports it?

This is not the first time a Canadian government has overlooked parental rights or attempted to. In 1920, the Indian Act was amended to make attendance at government schools mandatory. First Nations parents could be jailed or fined if their children did not attend.

Traditional parents in Toronto schools are now being told they may not remove their children from equity classes regardless of culture or beliefs.

The forced assimilation and enculturation of First Nations children is often viewed with cold fury by First Nations leaders, who say their children were stripped of self-respect and taught to hate themselves by being told their cultural norms were invalid.

We are being called homophobes.

The residential schools continued until the 1960s. At the insistence of the First Nations leaders, Ottawa began returning children from the residential schools back to the reserves, only to find that parents were confused about their parental roles and children had lost their connection with the community. Many children then became victims of abuse in their own community, and so the government again intervened, scooping these children up into provincial child care agencies. Most of these children turned to alcohol and drug abuse, many remain in psychiatric institutions or prisons, and many actually committed suicide—all because parental rights were ignored and traditions and religions bypassed.

In 1897, the French sociologist Durkheim did a study of suicide in Italy, noting that sudden changes in social orders, whether due to growth or catastrophe, caused people to be much more inclined to self-destruction. We've seen an example of this in the Hobbema reserve, which received a sudden influx of money in the 1980s from oil reserves found in Alberta. Suicide rates began to soar. Social experimentation is a dangerous thing.

We view the equity and inclusive policy as the new residential school policy and we foresee devastation for our children that has not been told about yet, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender group. We want to know: Why is the government pushing this bill, which is clearly more than an anti-bullying bill?

Allan Hubley, the father of 15-year-old Jamie Hubley, the gay student who tragically killed himself last year, said that this is one issue where partisan politics and special interest groups should not get in the way of the ultimate goal of protecting kids from bullying. We cannot allow this important piece of legislation, he said, to get bogged down with different groups using it as an opportunity to further their own agendas and use someone's tragedy to promote things. We must protect all kids as soon as possible.

Some specific things about the bill that I disagree with that struck me: The bill requires gay-straight clubs in all schools if children want them. What about children like mine who were overweight and had an accent? Would I put her in a so-called “ugly” club, or a “fat” club? My child wouldn't want to be identified that way. We all know that children don't want to be made to be different; they want to fit in. Handicapped children want to be mainstreamed. I'm an ex-teacher. If I had a gay child who was bullied in school, I would find a way to protect that child. I don't know what I would do; I don't know if I'd go to the teacher—maybe that could make it worse. Or would I go to the bully? I would find a way, but I wouldn't put them in a club where they'd be singled out and be made to be even more different.

Section 300.0.1 talks about inappropriate behaviour about 15 times: addressing “inappropriate pupil behaviour” and promoting “early intervention”; providing “appropriate consequences” for inappropriate behaviour. And it goes on and on. It smacks a little bit of the Big Brother sound. If I'm Hindu, if I'm Punjabi, if I'm a Christian, is my child being inappropriate because they feel uncomfortable participating in a same-sex wedding drama, for example, at school? What is appropriate for one is not always appropriate for others.

These, MPPs, are real fears and concerns that we have. These are not imagined or hysterical feelings. The silent majority are afraid to speak up, and that's why you're not hearing the other side. I personally know of teachers who are afraid of losing their jobs. I know of a parent whose child was abused in reverse bullying but she's afraid to speak up because she thinks it would make it worse for her child in school. I'm hoping that some of these people will have the courage to come forward and talk to you.

There are already several anti-bullying bills in place: policy/program memorandum 119 (1993, 2009), Bill 212

in 2007, Bill 157 in 2009, and now Bill 14—an excellent bill. What is wrong with it? Apparently these bills have not worked yet, but on March 11 last year, the Catholic school board in Toronto issued a document showing that bullying in their system has not increased due to sexual orientation. Should we not be studying a system that works? Why are we ignoring it to reinvent the wheel?

If religion works better than the public system, then we should stop bullying using proven methods—and somebody has already talked about the fact that we need to love and have compassion and those kinds of things. That's where it starts; that's how to stop bullying. We want honest, open discussions with the homosexual community and we need to have them without being forced.

MPPs, please hear our cries as parents; we are genuinely concerned that children are now suffering abuse through this equity curriculum and a bill that would support it. Look at the expression on the faces of the children at a school in Sudbury where they view explicit sexual material. A similar incident happened last month in a community centre in Toronto. Though not as dramatic, it was equally shocking to the person who saw it, right on Weston Road. I'm going to pass these around at the end.

**1630**

**Ms. Luvy Avila:** I am a mother. My name is Luvy. I have two children who were diagnosed with autism; that is, they are autistic. The two of them are autistic. Every word they learn, everything they are able to do and everything they are able to understand costs me a lot of my time, social services and also my money. They are my whole life. I don't want the school system to teach them differently from what I teach them at home. I do not want them confused to think they may be a different sex.

Bill 13 will require all schools to have gay-straight clubs, but it will also support the Toronto school curriculum, which I strongly disagree with.

When I first heard about Bill 13, I felt shock so bad to think my government will take away my right as a parent to teach my children like I want. I did not believe it at first. The only anti-bullying bill that I want is Bill 14, because it protects all children and it does not take away my parental rights.

I come on this day seeking, asking, looking for your help to protect my children from the abuse we feel by this Bill 13. This bill will take away my right to teach the values I want to teach my children. If you pass Bill 13, who will help me to protect my children?

Please pass Bill 14. It will protect every single child from bullying in Toronto. Please help me.

I shared with people in many different places, stores, neighbours, and we made a petition. I got around 1,000 signatures and I gave them in this place to Lisa MacLeod, and I have now copies of around 200 more that I gave to my MPP, Eric Hoskins, in the St. Clair office. I have 200 copies here and I want to read the petition if there is time.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the parents of Toronto and others, strongly request your support against Bill 13 because it supports the new curriculum that is being implemented in the TDSB. The curriculum guide says it is mandatory under the name of 'equitable and inclusive schools' for children from kindergarten to grade 12 to participate in activities that promote gay lifestyles."

It says, "encourage girls and boys to role-play opposite roles and students to have their own pride parade in their school attended by the local media, as well as representatives from Pride Toronto."

On page 10, "Can a parent have their child accommodated out of human rights education based on religious grounds? No.

"Bill 13 asserts all Ontario children deserve to be respected and free to choose, but if this bill becomes law, it will pass over the basic rights of many people, freedom of beliefs and parental rights. Our children will be brainwashed by allowing that pretense to be for equity and inclusiveness. Children are bullied for many reasons, but this bill will make them direct targets of bullying if they think differently from LGBTs.

"Also, parents will be bullied and afraid to speak freely in case we are accused of being homophobic. Bill 13 is not inclusive because we are not included."

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your presentation. We have consumed the whole 15 minutes.

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** You can leave the presentations here and the clerk will see that the committee gets a copy. We thank you very much for the time you took to make the presentation today.

#### MS. IRIS JONES

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Our next delegation is Iris Jones. Good afternoon, and thank you very much for coming in. As with the previous delegation, you have 15 minutes to make your presentation. If any time is left at the end of the presentation sufficient to have all three parties have questions, we will do that. If not, we will just have questions from a single party; or if you use all your time, it's your time to use. So thank you very much for coming in. As you start the presentation, if you would state your name into the microphone for Hansard.

**Ms. Iris Jones:** It's just going to take me a minute to set up here. This is almost looking as messy as my home desk.

Good afternoon. Honourable members of the Standing Committee on Social Policy and guests, thank you for welcoming me at this committee to share my thoughts about Bill 13 and the topic of bullying.

I'd like to introduce myself and share with you my understanding of bullying from my own personal experience, along with changes that I suggest to make to Bill 13 and incorporating Bill 14. I have a couple of ideas there. I understand that's part of what this is about.

My name is Iris Jones. I confess most happily that, yes, I am a Christian. I'm a mother of two daughters and

a business owner in the Muskoka region. In my life, I have come to understand bullying from a couple of different perspectives, and I'll share those with you now.

My first understanding of bullying is of one group of people permitting the bullying of, and bullying, another group of people into near-oblivion. Though born in Canada, I am of German ancestry. So this is an issue that I've been well aware of through my life. I've wrestled with this identity of having a German ancestry, finding Remembrance Day services particularly poignant. Last year, I was in Israel at Yad Vashem. That was a challenge, I admit. It's a shameful and saddening part of my identity, although there are also very many things I appreciate about my German ancestry as well.

Yet, as a Canadian-born person, I always took comfort in my Canadian identity. We peacekeeping Canadians, peacekeepers all over the world—isn't that a wonderful thing to uphold? Who could ever claim we hurt anyone? And yet, when I was in my early 30s, I held that view before I came to realize that there are two kinds of bullies, and this other kind of bully I don't really see addressed in either bill, and it's a concern to me. There are those bullies who perform the cruelty on another and those who are complicit in not preventing the bullying from happening in the first place, by allowing it to happen, by letting a slippery slope slide and seeing people who are marginalized and not doing anything about it, not being able to do anything about it till it's too late.

By the time Kristallnacht hit in Germany, Germans were blindsided, and you know what? They were ashamed of that. But, hey, they were in the dark. This kind of rings a bell, people saying, "We're in the dark about something." Let's remember that. Let's keep that in mind.

So it wasn't until the mid-1990s that I came to learn of the 1939 St. Louis ship, which held 900-plus Jewish passengers—men, women and, yes, children—who left European shores and were seeking refuge in another nation, any nation: South America, Cuba, the States. And, in fact, Canada was their last resort. What did we do? Well, we can conveniently blame Lapointe and other Quebec immigration ministers and feel very innocent ourselves, and yet when we look at our Prime Minister at the time, he was no better.

#### **1640**

As a Christian, what did I do? I grieved in my spirit. I realized, "Hang on a second. I can't feel all comfortable in my Canadian identity, because we have this problem on our shores." Then a good friend, Brian, who's in his 60s—he grew up in Toronto, the Don Valley area, and he remembers seeing signs in Toronto storefronts saying, "No dogs or Jews allowed." This is our lovely city of Toronto, where I was born, in what is now the GTA. Shocking. The saying was, "None is too many."

Yes, thank God—I do thank Him. If you don't believe in God, that's fine. Just thank your lucky stars or whatever you like; that's not a problem. I don't have a problem with that. I believe in a pluralistic society where we

can all have our own views. That's great. I like that. I love that about Canada.

I'm trying to remember which Prime Minister—I think it was Chrétien who said, "Never again." He was the first Prime Minister to visit Germany and say that in opposition to the saying about the St. Louis ship, which was, "None is too many," which is horrendous.

Most of those innocent Jewish people ended up back in Europe and, yes, most did die in concentration camps. Since then, we have had an official apology from our government, and I'm happy for that. That's a good thing. It doesn't make reparations, but let's do what we can. Better if it hadn't happened in the first place, but at least we're admitting to our past, as we are with residential schools.

It has been difficult for me to come to terms with learning how Canada was complicit in sending those Jewish people to their deaths.

Sorry, I kind of went a bit over this.

We have learned about the severe, cruel bullying endured by our First Nation people groups at the hands of teachers in religious residential schools—which Lynn Jackson referred to as well—horrendous abuses that continued on into the latter part of the 20th century. So much for taking any kind of solace in our being innocent of bullying other nations and people groups.

At a young age, I too was bullied. I won't go into the details. I had to fight back to survive. I have had the help and protection of the Christian God that I worship, in my journey in healing as I have worked through the levels of spiritual, psychological and emotional trauma. It hasn't been fun, but we all walk the walk we're served, don't we? I have also become highly sensitized to recognizing when others, particularly children, are being bullied. You gain a sensitivity to that. You kind of get a sixth sense after a while. I have a mother hen instinct when I see bullying occur because of my own experiences.

Regardless of the people group or identity of the person who I hear has been bullied, bullying of any sort is unacceptable and to be stopped. The major reason for bullying is physical appearance—if someone's tall, short, thin, fat; hopefully, they won't be called fat, but you know what I mean—larger—which Bill 13 does not address in any of the clubs that are offered. I find this appalling. It's unacceptable. Bullying of those from religious groups is shown in surveys to be just behind that of gendered bullying. Thus, I advocate not specifying which clubs should meet, what type of club, but leaving that up to students and having an overseeing teacher to determine that.

I say that because people who have been bullied, if they don't unlearn the bullying, they will end up bullying others. So if you have students working with students, what guarantee do you have that the student leader isn't going to inadvertently bully others in their leadership skills? I don't see these bills offering anything about leadership skills. If you're saying that children as young as kindergarten can lead a bullying group, well, you had better teach these children leadership skills, or this is

absurd and ridiculous. You could have children bullied in these bullying groups. Let's use our heads here. This is not a thorough bill, and I find that very disturbing.

Each of the boys in the article that I'm going to read committed suicide last year because of bullying, as told in the article by Chris Traber on November 17, 2011. "Community Groups Speak Out Against Bullying" is the name of the article, and it was a yorkregion.com article.

"In 2010, while on one of those walks in Pickering, the 11-year-old was mugged by an older boy who attended his school." I'm sorry, I didn't have the name.

"Chris Howell"—there we go—"had Tourette's syndrome, obsessive-compulsive and attention-deficit disorders, all of which made him a target at school." Again, this is a real problem for people who are appearance-bullied, and this bill does not address this.

"Some of his Hamilton schoolmates threatened him last summer and during his first week of Grade 12."

"Jamie Hubley's life became increasingly difficult after he acknowledged he was gay."

"The 15-year-old Ottawa student was no stranger to danger. In grade 7, a group of kids tried to shove batteries down his throat"—and I'm sure you've heard the story but, you know what? It's worth hearing again—"but high school took things to a different and sinister level."

"These three young people were victims of bullying. No longer." This was written back in November. "Each committed suicide within the past 12 weeks." This was last year. This has been in the news. You know what? When I hear this on the news, because of my trauma that I've experienced, I can't watch TV. I don't do it. All I get is TVO. That's pretty innocent. I can listen to some of that, and that's good. But when I hear it on the radio, and I'm an avid CBC Radio One listener, you know what? I can picture it all, and it's as if it happens to you.

I'm sorry. I don't remember the name, but the gay activist who was brutally murdered in Halifax recently—I wept, and I still weep. I don't know if it would offend his family, but I pray for their peace, and it deeply disturbs me.

I have a gay friend, Mark. He's a beautiful person, and he's a person of faith. You know what? I'm an evangelical Christian, and we talk openly. He knows that I have different views than him. But you know what? Do you know why it doesn't bother him? Because I care about him. When he experienced a recent death of someone who was very close to him, I was there. I was comforting, and I wasn't judging him. This isn't something that people in society get, that Christians and other people of other faiths often do have the ability to hold this cognitive dissonance.

What a York University professor who talks about—whose name has escaped me. But the whole idea is that you can agree to disagree with someone and that tolerance doesn't mean you actually hold the exact same belief, but somehow in our post-modern society we have convinced ourselves that, oh, in order for whatever group to feel secure, we all need to say we believe the same thing. Well, that is nonsense. That's ridiculous.

Our pluralistic society was based on the idea that we can all agree to disagree, have varying religions and have varying faith views, have atheistic views. I've also been interacting with atheistic friends, learning that atheism really is about what you don't believe.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Iris Jones:** I have one minute? Oh, dear. I have lots to read. I'll hand this out.

Okay. I have quite a bit about the bill, which I'd like to read. I suggest rewording the first sentence of Bill 13 to read, "An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to bullying" and leave out the rest. The above change to Bill 13 is necessary because there are no other needed matters to address in an anti-bullying bill, save anti-bullying alone.

**1650**

Change the definition of "bullying" in subsection 1(1) of the Education Act in Bill 13 to—and I've melded together the two—"bullying" means repeated and aggressive behaviour by one or more pupils or school board employees where the behaviour,

"(a) is of a written, verbal, electronic (cyberbullying or other) or other form of expression, a physical act or gesture or any combination of them if it is directed at the student"—and I list them all. I'm not going to read it all. I'll give these to you; you can read them. I'm going to skip to the end. I didn't realize I was taking so long.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Rather than you rushing through it, if you want to leave your presentation behind, the clerk will make a copy for every member of the committee—

**Ms. Iris Jones:** Oh, I have copies. I have 25 copies.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Oh, okay.

**Ms. Iris Jones:** Yeah; 27, actually.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Okay. Then, they will read through it as we're dealing with the final version of the bill.

**Ms. Iris Jones:** May I address one more issue? I'm skipping to the end here.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Very short.

**Ms. Iris Jones:** Okay. Thank you very much.

I suggest removing section 301(3.1), "Agreement with third parties re use of schools"—and this is why, and I think you'll like this: Those individuals and third parties renting or leasing from boards across Ontario are an asset as they provide much-needed additional revenue into the Ministry of Education coffers. Who would refuse that?

The Ministry of Education should instead offer better rental and lease incentives to encourage more individuals and third parties to enter into said agreements, not discourage revenue income from school board renting and leasing.

The Ministry of Education needs to, rather, find more creative ways to show that it is more open and user-friendly towards individuals and third parties seeking rental or leasing arrangements with local schools; school boards need to seek to lower costs of education for overburdened taxpayers across Ontario.

The Ministry of Education should seek to encourage this type of multi-use land and property sharing, as it

reuses land and property space during weekends, reduces the need for building more land-wasting facilities, and recycles—

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Okay. We do have to stop there.

**Ms. Iris Jones:** Well, you get my point.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Yeah. Very good. We thank you very much for your presentation, but we do have to stop there. I'm sure the committee will read your presentation to—

**Ms. Iris Jones:** We need to set an example for the younger generation of caring for our schools again.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your presentation.

**Ms. Iris Jones:** Thanks.

#### PARENTS AS FIRST EDUCATORS

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Our next presentation is Parents as First Educators: Teresa Pierre, director, and Joe Di Fonzo as a member.

We'll just give everybody an opportunity to change seats here.

Thank you very much for coming in this afternoon. As with the previous delegations, it will be 15 minutes for the presentation. You can use all or any part of it. If there's any left at the end, we will have some questions from the committee. As you start your presentation, we would appreciate if you would just, for the Hansard recording, state your name before you speak so they can put that in Hansard. With that, thank you very much for coming in, and the floor is yours.

**Mr. Joe Di Fonzo:** Thank you. My name is Joe Di Fonzo. I am a recently retired teacher of the Toronto Catholic District School Board. I am here today to speak as a parent of seven children and also as a founding member of PAFE, Parents as First Educators.

PAFE is a grassroots organization with many thousands of supporters in the publicly funded Catholic schools in Ontario. It seeks to inform ratepayers about faith-based issues in the schools, to pursue transparency and accountability in board relations with ratepayers, and to help ratepayers communicate with trustees and board staff on issues of concern within our schools.

I would first like to thank this committee for allowing public input on this proposed legislation to deal with the problem of bullying within our schools.

Today, PAFE is here to speak about our parental concerns about Bill 13. PAFE is also part of a coalition of groups who will be making legal submissions on May 22 in Ottawa.

We have before us two proposed pieces of legislation: Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, and Bill 14, which technically now is Bill 80, the Anti-Bullying Act, both aimed at dealing with the issue of bullying.

Bullying is a complex and multi-faceted behaviour that legislation alone cannot fix. Bullying is not a new phenomenon, but is of concern in that it is too common and often can lead to very serious consequences, includ-

ing, sadly, suicide. StatsCanada has confirmed other studies in reporting, in a study between 2005 and 2009, that one in four students were bullied at least once.

Recent cases of parents having their children resort to suicide as an answer to the persistent bullying they have experienced is cause for concern for all parents. All parents want schools that are truly inclusive, where all students are respected, all students feel safe and where there is no room for bullying or harassment of any kind, regardless of its motive.

There are several very serious difficulties with Bill 13 with respect to how it proposes to provide safe schools. Ironically, Bill 13 is not inclusive in its approach and, even more ironically, Bill 13 will be a means of bullying certain school boards and parents and violating fundamental rights. Let me explain these two points.

First, Bill 13 is not inclusive in its approach and focus. It is not inclusive in the groups it chooses to protect. According to the Toronto District School Board research report, which surveyed approximately 105,000 students in the Toronto area, the most common type of bullying was bullying based on body image—38%. The second most common reason for bullying, and perhaps surprisingly for some, is not gender, not sexual orientation or race but, rather, grades or marks. After marks, the next most common reason for bullying is cultural background, followed by language, gender at 6%, religion at 5% and then income.

As a sidebar: An Xtra magazine story criticized the accuracy of this Toronto District School Board study yesterday because the study didn't include Catholic schools. This shows the kinds of lengths to which people will go to try to discredit people who are saying that we need to take a breath and look critically at the extent of the bullying problem. The writer presumably is not saying that the accuracy of the study itself is in question. She can't be arguing that rates of bullying in the public board on body image are not almost eight times that of any other category, with gender an issue in some cases. So what she is saying is that to get a different picture of bullying based on sexual orientation for the province, there would have to be an absolutely enormous number of them in the Catholic board. This is not supported by the studies. It is, in fact, an outrageous thing to say.

A number in the 6% range for incidents based on sexual orientation is supported by other Canadian bullying statistical studies, such as the school reports made by Stop A Bully. Unfortunately, both systems have the same strengths and weaknesses with regard to bullying. Kids sometimes slip through the cracks in each system and both present life-saving supports. Neither is perfect.

To return to the question of how inclusive Bill 13 truly is, Bill 13 does not include the most common types of bullying in the clubs that are mentioned in section 9. In section 9, it says:

"Every board shall support pupils who want to establish and lead,

"(a) activities or organizations that promote gender equity;

“(b) activities or organizations that promote anti-racism;

“(c) activities or organizations that promote the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people with disabilities; or

“(d) activities or organizations that promote the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, including organizations with the name gay-straight alliance or another name.”

My question is this: Why is Bill 13 focusing on just these four groups and excluding those groups which have a higher incidence of bullying, such as those bullied for reasons of body image or marks? Bullying as a result of sexual orientation does occur. However, Bill 13 is unduly focused on this one group at the expense of others bullied for far more common reasons.

With its focus on just these four groups, none of my seven children would be included in any of these focus groups. I have seven children. All happen to be able-bodied, white heterosexual males. Bill 13 is telling school boards to be selective in which type of activities and organizations they will support. My children, who are as susceptible to being bullied as any other, are excluded.

#### **1700**

A second major problem with Bill 13 is its intent to bully Catholic school boards into violating their own doctrines. The current Minister of Education and the Premier himself have both been quoted as saying that Catholic schools will have GSAs—student-led clubs singularly focused on activism for those with same-sex attraction.

Bill 13 insists that GSAs will be allowed in all schools. By insisting on these student-led clubs, the government is pushing beyond asking for tolerance for individuals. It forces schools to accept a structure—the GSA, or gay-straight alliance—that both parents and bishops do not support.

Catholic parents have a problem with GSAs in Catholic schools. The GSA literature explicitly asks students to work against an idea called “heterosexism.” Heterosexism would include the Judaeo-Christian idea that heterosexual marriage is God’s plan for forming human families. The Catholic Church and Catholic schools cannot support a club that seeks to undermine their teaching on marriage. To ask it to do so is coercion.

The Catholic trustees association has produced a reasonable response to the ministry’s demands regarding support groups or clubs. Its document, *Respecting Differences*, offers the opportunity for there to be anti-bullying clubs; however, they must be all-inclusive, not focused on any one group of students, and they must be adult-led.

Question: What is wrong with having a support group or club that is inclusive in supporting all students who are bullied, whether it’s because of body image, marks, culture, language, gender, religion, income, sexual orientation or any other reason? What is wrong with that idea?

Rather than permitting students to learn about their differences and recognize their commonalities in equity

clubs, this bill specifically sets out to isolate students into issue-specific groups.

I have another question. What is wrong with parents, who every day entrust their children to the proper care of adults—their teachers—acting in loco parentis, having their children, who are experiencing bullying and perhaps depression, under the watchful eye of a trained adult? What is wrong with that idea?

This would seem to be not only reasonable but very prudent. It seems to me that it is unreasonable for the government to insist that parents agree to delegate their parental authority to their children’s peers.

The only Catholic group that has come out in favour of student-run clubs is a group of activists in the Catholic teachers’ union, and that is because they support a radical view of social equality that goes against the Catholic doctrine of the family. Many teachers have told us—and, as I mentioned before, I’m a retired teacher—that OECTA does not speak for them, but they are not free to speak out. Neither does OECTA speak for thousands of Catholic parents who strongly disagree with them.

There are a number of international human rights instruments that support broad parental authority, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that “parties to the present covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.”

Before superseding the choices parents make in education, legislators are cautioned that this is not a right to be overridden casually. There is an obvious constitutional violation in forcing religiously based schools to establish clubs not endorsed by the faith community, parents or students, or to implement a curriculum that disrespects their beliefs.

If Bill 13 is passed as is, it is highly likely we will see the province face years of expensive taxpayer-funded litigation as religious parents, groups and Catholic school boards seek to have their constitutionally enshrined rights and freedoms recognized and respected by this government.

We are concerned that the bill could be used as an excuse for school officials to try to silence those who speak on behalf of traditional marriage. We think we are right to worry now that we have heard MPP Glen Murray say in this House that the church does not have the right to teach its own doctrine.

We are right to worry when a high-profile sportscaster such as Damian Goddard has had to bring a suit to the Human Rights Commission for being fired simply for stating his support publicly for traditional marriage.

We have seen GSA assemblies used to bully Christian students at Parkside public high school in Hamilton.

Over the weekend, a video went viral of Christian students being bullied by Dan Savage, the creator of the very It Gets Better campaign Dalton McGuinty has partnered with in sponsoring Bill 13. Savage said that the

teachings of the Bible on homosexuality are—and I'm going to use his words; I'm just preparing you for this—"bullshit," and then called them "pansy asses" when the students walked out of his tirade. I find it very troublesome when a so-called anti-bullying advocate is acting as the bully himself and publicly embarrassing young students because of their religious beliefs.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures both freedom of religion and conscience in regard to government action, from school boards to Parliament. We need to make sure that freedom of religion is protected in our schools.

As stated at the outset, bullying is a complex and multifaceted behaviour. Bill 14 suggests that anti-bullying strategies be taught at school. If the final bill includes teaching anti-bullying strategies, we would like to make a suggestion that character education be one of these strategies.

Having read both bills, Parents as First Educators believes that Bill 14, now Bill 80, is the better bill. Bill 14 is better because it is more inclusive, not focusing on any one issue group, and it does not force clubs that threaten parental rights or religious rights. Moreover, too many parts of Bill 13 are dangerously worded. The clause that states that students could be penalized for things they "ought to have known were discriminatory" is much too vague. A lawyer addressing a meeting with the Catholic teachers' union last week pointed out that this clause is so vague that it will open the door to a spate of suits to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

We are sure that no lawmaker wants to throw the school system into utter chaos by setting up a culture of fear.

In conclusion, Bill 13 is extremely—

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** That's the one we were waiting for: "in conclusion."

**Mr. Joe Di Fonzo:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your presentation. We very much appreciate it, but the time has expired.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** On a point of order, Chair: I think this is the third or fourth time—maybe even more than that—that I have heard a Toronto District School Board report on bullying referenced. I'm wondering if we could direct the committee clerk to obtain a copy for each member.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** We'll have them—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It was?

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** It's this one, right?

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** We got it yesterday, as one of the presenters presented it—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** That's the survey? I'm looking for the survey, not the equity and inclusive—not that document.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** We'll have staff look into it.

Thank you very much for your presentation.

## CONCERNED CITIZENS AGAINST CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Our next presentation is Citizens Addressing Sexual Exploitation: Judy Nuttall, secretary.

Thank you very much for coming in and joining us today and making your presentation. As with the previous presenters, you have 15 minutes to use as you see fit. If there's sufficient time left at the end of your presentation for questions from the committee, we will provide them with that opportunity.

If you would state your name before you start your presentation for the Hansard, and with that, we'll turn it over to you to make that presentation. Thank you.

**Ms. Judy Nuttall:** Thank you. My name is Judy Nuttall. I live in Barrie. To the chairperson and members of Parliament for the Standing Committee on Social Policy, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Judy Nuttall. I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

There was a mistake on my form, which needs to be corrected. I represent Concerned Citizens Against Child Pornography, founded as a sister organization to CASE, Canadians Addressing Sexual Exploitation, in Barrie.

**1710**

Bill 13 and Bill 14 both deal with anti-bullying. Bill 14 defines bullying and its causes, and recommends process for support of bullied children while also defining ways to redirect the negative attitudes and impulses of children who bully others. The overview for Bill 13 has the title of "bullying and other matters." The "other matters" refer to the equity and inclusion policy, which is a sex ed curriculum for children from kindergarten to grade 12. Bill 13 states that bullying is mainly based on sexual orientation, whereas Bill 14 covers a wide range of the roots of bullying and how to bring change, and also covers Internet bullying as well.

Most schools would give a far wider description of the elements of bullying than Bill 13 states. Bullying covers a vast area of children's perceptions such as: the wrong colour of clothing, wrong sneakers, home background, orientation, academic success or just not being liked. Bullying expands many minor differences, exaggerating the problem well out of proportion, carrying it into a very unhealthy realm, which offends and hurts the victim. Some children are more susceptible to negative or distorted comments and are more easily hurt. It is the gang mentality, and the cruelty exhibited by it, that engenders exclusion and harms the victim or victims, and can drive a child into deep depression or a solitary and lonely existence.

I require that all areas of Ontario be granted a hearing such as this, for Toronto and Ottawa are absolutely not representative of the whole province of Ontario.

The "equity and inclusion" school policy manual is the "other matters" part of Bill 13, the anti-bullying bill. It is 219 pages long and is owned or put out by the Toronto District School Board, 2011. The title printed at the top

of every page is Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism.

The first section is for kindergarten to grade 3 classes. The kindergarten children, aged three to five, are introduced to different kinds of families, like gay, lesbian, adopted, single-parent, extended and divorced, and the stereotypes that are associated with them.

The grade 1 section is called “‘Pink vs. Blue’—Challenging Gender Stereotypes.” The class is asked to select toys and put them into a Venn configuration for boy, girl or gender-neutral. Name-calling is dealt with in an unusual way, which actually gives the children a new and extended but totally unacceptable vocabulary—please excuse my language—such as sissy, fag, gaylord, batty man, poota, tomboy, lezzy, dyke, homo and queer. Why do grade 1s have to hear these words, and in school, and from a teacher? It is reprehensible—talk about pornographic words.

Grade 2 children are given the opportunity to discover their rights in this section covering sexual orientation, skin colour, religion, first language, ability or disability, job and pay, family and, finally, gender. Sources include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—an undefined human rights policy—and the Equity Foundation Statement. I was very interested to note that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is included. This declaration includes freedom of thought, freedom of conscience and freedom of speech, but more of that later.

Grade 3 children, seven to eight years of age, study a section called “Celebrating Family Diversity and Pride.” Amongst other things, the teacher is asked to search for images of Pride Week and the Pride Parade, especially from the Pride Toronto website, and print them out for the class or project them on the smart board or screen. The class is to discuss the significance of the Toronto annual Pride Week to some same-sex families. The class is to incorporate it into family diversity. Page 55 suggests arranging a guest speaker from the LGBTQ or the Pride Parade or other agencies.

I personally find this extremely radical and absolutely unacceptable for grade 3 children who are only aged seven to eight. These images may have a pornographic implication for these young and impressionable minds. It could be very difficult for children to remove such disturbing images from their minds, causing trauma.

Why does anti-bullying Bill 13 contain such explicit material, which has no content about bullying, supporting children who are bullied, or preventing further bullying? It may well exacerbate the problem. Are you attempting to destroy the innocence of the children of the province of Ontario?

Grades 4 to 6 is for children aged eight to 11 years of age. Under analyzing media images, the teacher is asked to go and buy People, Vogue and Chatelaine and, in addition, to buy Out, Siren, Xtra, Curve and A-Asian magazines. The class is to examine the magazine pictures to find diverse couples. I wonder how explicit and pornographic that material is. Historically, teachers are obliged to remove any such material from students.

Grade 7 and 8 students who are still in elementary school and grades 9 to 12 in high school are in the final section. The equitable and inclusive material is incorporated into the diverse subject matter throughout the curriculum. Pornography should never, ever be given to children.

The first primary and secondary school system was founded by Ryerson, based on the principles of a religious and moral education system, in 1871. I wonder what he would have said about this 2011 curriculum had he been alive.

This anti-bullying bill is entirely based on the premise that all bullying in schools, from kindergarten up, is anti-gay. This is a false assumption. Please remove all such material from this bill. Please allow our children to go to school, unconscious of the many differences that we all have, as they do today, and happily work through those early years of innocent wonder and discovery.

Finally, I return to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with its statements of freedom of thought, of conscience and of speech. Canada’s bill of rights and freedoms contains similar wording.

On page 9, I was surprised to find the following: Can teachers choose not to address controversial issues for fear of negative parental response? No. Can teachers choose not to address controversial issues because they might contradict religious beliefs? No. Can schools send home permission slips before starting these issues? No. Can parents have a child accommodated out of the human rights education? No. Finally, under parental and family rights, it says that no student can be exempted from human rights education.

If the rental of a school by churches and other groups is affected, they will be unable to function according to conscience before Almighty God and stay true to the foundational strengths of their mission statements. The UDHR states freedom of conscience, thought, speech and religion; Canada’s bill of rights and freedoms states similar freedoms of religion, speech etc.

How can this Bill 13 go forward while it opposes these basic foundational and legal strengths? Who is it that is attempting to bully the parents, the teachers and our children?

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your presentation. We do have about three minutes. I think it’s the government side.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you, Chair. We have no questions for this deputant.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Okay, thank you. Thank you very much for your presentation. He’s trying to save me some time from me not being quite as punctual as some of the others.

**Ms. Judy Nuttall:** Shall I leave these here?

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Yes, if you leave them here, we’ll make sure that everyone on the committee gets a copy of that.

**Ms. Judy Nuttall:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your presentation.

## IENGAGE BULLYING PREVENTION

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** The next presenter is iEngage Bullying Prevention: Anthony McLean, founder. Thank you very much for coming in and sharing some time with us and making a presentation on these two bills. First of all, you get a 15-minute time slot to make your presentation. Any time that you don't use we will share, if there's sufficient time, equally among the three parties to ask any questions. If you use all your time—it's your time to use, so we're not trying to rush you through it. We're interested in what you have to tell us, as opposed to what we want to ask you. So thank you very much for coming in. If you will, before you start your presentation just give your name to Hansard for the record. With that, the floor is yours.

1720

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** Absolutely. Okay, great. My name is Anthony McLean. Thank you for being here. I'll tell you what: I'm a motivational speaker. I go to schools and I talk about bullying. I've been doing it for about seven years. I'll go into a high school and have 500 kids sitting on the floor, and sometimes people ask me, "Man, don't you get scared speaking in front of 500 teenagers?" I'm like, "No, man, that's cool." I get scared right now with you guys, with your BlackBerrys out and your suits and ties on.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** No tie.

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** No tie. Thank you. Awesome. See, I've got to look at this—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** All right; there you go. Awesome.

I'm very happy to be here. Again, I've been doing bullying prevention work in Ontario schools for the last seven years, and this school year alone I've been in over 100 Ontario schools in 11 different school boards and I've been featured on the Premier's blog twice. If you go on the Premier's blog on YouTube—I'm not trying to brag or anything like that, but I think I set the record for the most hits in 48 hours. So check that out for sure—giving a little plug for the Premier's blog there.

Why am I here? I'm here to talk about what I think about Bill 13 and Bill 14, and then answer any questions that you might have. I sort of live and eat and breathe bullying prevention, so if there's anything I can answer, that would be good.

I support Bill 14 and I'm not in favour of Bill 13, and I'll tell you why. I deal a lot in schools with kids who put each other into boxes. You walk into the cafeteria and it's like—I don't know if you guys have seen the movie Mean Girls, but in Mean Girls, the new girl comes to the school and she gets a tour through the caf, and it's like, "All right, here's how it is. The brothers, they sit over here, so all the black guys sit on this side. And then over here, we've got the jocks; they sit over there. The nerds sit over there." Boxes is what I face when I walk into schools too: kids that put each other into boxes. It's like, "I don't hang out with you because you're different than me," or whatever the case may be.

What I'm trying to do is get rid of these boxes and get kids to walk across the floor and get to know each other. The problem I have with Bill 13—and I think it comes from a good place, but it puts four big boxes out there: kids who are bullied based on gender or based on a disability or based on LGBTQ issues or based on racism. Those are important issues; I don't want to minimize them at all, but the problem is: It's us, again, putting kids in boxes and saying, "Okay, you're gay, so you can talk about your issues in this club. You're going through racism. You feel you can talk about your issue in this club." And I think we're weaker when we're separated and we're stronger when we're together.

In some of the schools that I go to, they do a practice called restorative justice, restorative practices. You might have heard of it. This is where, when an aggressor has been bothering somebody, the aggressor will sit down with the victim and they'll sit down with their parents and the extended school community, and they'll talk. Questions are asked of that victim who went through—maybe it's verbal torment; whatever the case may be—and the person conducting this circle in restorative practices will ask, "How did it make you feel when you went through that? What did your family say when they heard that this happened? What did your friends say?" The aggressor sits in on this conversation and hears the impact that their words had, and often this creates feelings of empathy and feelings of genuine remorse. Not the remorse that says, "Oh no, I got caught," but the remorse that looks across the floor at someone that's different and says, "I see it now. You're a human, just like me."

To make that circle happen is a very involved process. What we can learn from that is transferable. There are kids in schools today that are using homophobic slander in their hallways and there are kids in school today that are calling each other names and harassing their peers. And these kids will not join a gay-straight alliance. There are conversations that would happen in that gay-straight alliance that these kids need to be privy to, but it won't happen when we put each other in boxes.

The last thing I want to say—I don't know if you noticed, but I'm wearing a pink shirt today. I'm thankful that you're wearing a pink scarf as well; you got the memo. Anyone else? Another pink—I think pink stripes—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** That's good. This guy's great. He doesn't know what I'm talking about. You're looking good. I like that. Anyone else wearing pink?

Anyway, the reason I'm wearing pink: You might have heard about what happened in Nova Scotia when a boy in grade 9 came to school one day, first day of school, wearing a pink shirt, and two grade 11 students started making fun of him and calling him all these homophobic names because he was wearing pink. They threatened him. They said, "Tomorrow when you come to school we're going to beat you up if you dress in pink." The student goes home; he doesn't know what to do. He's really worried; really concerned. What he

doesn't know is that two grade 12 students, David Shepherd and Travis Price, heard this happen and they said, "No, not at our school. We're not going to put up with this." They got on Facebook—which is often blamed for cyberbullying but it can be used for good—and they sent a message to all their friends of Facebook telling them what happened, saying, "Tomorrow, everybody wear pink. Guys, girls; everyone wear pink." They got their cellphones out and sent text messages like these guys are doing over here and said, "Hey, everybody: Wear"—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** This is good. If I was in school, man, you guys would get in trouble right now. The students aren't allowed to do that when I speak. Anyway, it's all good. I'm not hating. I'm not hating.

So they got their cellphones out and sent text messages and said, "Everybody wear pink. Spread the word; spread the word." Then they went to a discount store and they bought 50 pink tank tops. They show up the next day at school: a whole bunch of students are wearing pink just like this guy. The ones that were not wearing pink: These two students would come up to them and say, "Hey, would you wear this pink shirt?" And the students were like, "Why?" They told the story about this grade 9 student who had been bullied for wearing pink. One by one, people put the pink shirt on and they said, "We want to make a school where you don't get singled out for being different. It doesn't matter what colour shirt you have; it doesn't matter what colour skin you have; we are one school, we're one family. Would you wear pink?" One by one, people said, "Yeah, I'll wear pink too," and it spread through the school.

When the kid that got bullied showed up that day, can you imagine how he felt when he saw the whole student body wearing pink? Do you know what happened to the two kids that bullied that one kid?

I don't know either. We never heard from them again.

I challenge you: What would have happened if, instead of reaching out to the whole school, they had just reached out to the gay-straight alliance and said, "Let's wear pink today"? Do you think I'd be telling this story today?

The Ontario that I see doesn't put people in boxes. The Ontario that I see is united, and it begins with our kids. When I read Bill 14, I see inclusive language that will cover and protect all Ontario students, and that's why I support Bill 14. Thank you for your time.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for that. We have about five minutes. If we can keep the questions very short, we'll maybe get all three.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I have not made any comments other than to say thank you for people coming here today, but I'm going to say something I haven't said in public. The day that we actually debated Bill 14 and when Elizabeth Witmer was debating it: The night before, my husband and I found out that our daughter had been bullied, and it had been physical, at school.

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** Oh, my goodness.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** So, obviously that week was quite a personal week for us. She's in elementary school. They used the restorative method with the bully, and I'm happy to say it was quite effective. It doesn't make it easier when you're a parent dropping off your kid to school. It happens—and thankfully, again, she's in elementary school and it was an older kid—but it seemed to work.

Are we doing enough of this in all of our schools? It was something that was entirely new to me. I'm the education critic and I wasn't really aware that this was something that was done. I was pleased to say that my daughter's school was really effective at it. I know that my colleague here, Mrs. McKenna, also had some experiences with her own family, particularly her son.

From your experience, when you're going throughout Ontario, is that sort of the method that has been adopted in all school boards and various schools, or is it sort of a pick-and-choose, depending on who the principal is?

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** It really depends on the administration. I've found that anyone that's really had experience with it becomes an advocate and uses it and takes it to whatever school they go to. It's wonderful. It comes from a native practice. I think it hearkens back to the days of: You steal from the convenience store and your mom finds out, and she brings you back to the convenience store to look in the eyes of the person you stole from—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** That's not happened to anyone at this table, just so we're very clear—well, maybe Delaney.

1730

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** At least they won't admit it now, yeah.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thanks very much. Again, just thanks for coming. I don't want to take any of your time in case my colleagues have to say something—

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** We have a little bit more time, so if you want to go to the New Democratic Party.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Just to say that Bishop Marrocco/Thomas Merton school, in my riding, came to Queen's Park and did a phenomenal presentation about Pink Shirt Day. One of the joys of it was that there was no question what it was about. It was students gathering together from a Catholic school, confronting homophobia and saying, "Just because you wear pink, or even if you are gay, you are still a part of our family at the school."

I just wanted to ask you a question. We also had some students here, again from Catholic schools, who want to start gay-straight alliances in their schools. They don't want to do it during the school day; they want to do it after school, on their own time. Would you say that that was okay?

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** Well, I would say that I think it would be more effective—and there are people who need to hear the conversations—

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** But these students wanted this. They actually want to do this. They explained that it's a

charter right to do so: freedom of assembly. Would you say they couldn't?

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** I wouldn't say that they couldn't, but I do think it's more powerful when we're all together, talking about these issues. I could tell you another story about that, but I'm mindful of the time.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I think they don't preclude that. They just want to do this as well as have that other conversation.

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** I see. And you know—yeah.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** You have a very quick question?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Chair, we'll stand down our questions.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Okay, very good. Thank you very much, and thank you very much for your presentation.

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** All right. Thank you so much for having me. Take care, all right?

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** It was not only informative but even enjoyable, so thank you very much—

**Mr. Anthony McLean:** Thank you very much. Take care.

#### ROSE OF SHARON MISSION

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Our next delegation is Rose of Sharon Mission: Ulma Lee, member.

**Ms. Ulma Lee:** My name is Ulma Lee, originally from South Korea. This gentleman is Reverend Suh, chairman of the Korean church association in Toronto. Surprising for some, we have about 200 Korean churches in Toronto, so he's a very busy person. He tried, but he couldn't get his time slot, so now I am sharing my time with him. He will start.

**Rev. David Inkoo Suh:** Good afternoon. My name is David Inkoo Suh. I am the senior pastor of Toronto Somang Korean Presbyterian Church and also the president of the Council of Korean Churches in Ontario.

Today in our society, there are various definitions of what a family looks like. No family is perfect, and there are many instances where children grow up in a family structure which does not resemble the traditional definition of a nuclear family.

Children will always remain our most precious resource. The question remains: What is best for their growth and development? As Christian ministers, we continue to uphold the belief that the most ideal environment for the development of our children involves the presence of both a father and mother. The traditional views of both a mother and father within the family unit give our children a foundation that is much more stable and healthy. With the consistent changes our society encounters, certain elements, we believe, must stay consistent to cope and manage these changes. Traditional family is one of the pillars in our society.

Bill 13 seeks to expand society's definition of the marriage institution. However, the Bible clearly teaches that same-sex relationships do not fall within God's original intention for the marriage institution or family structure.

Our intention is not for further distance to be created between the Christian and LGBTQ community. However, as ministers, we continue to appeal to scripture as our ultimate authority in this matter. Therefore, it is our united stance to hold fast to an orthodox definition of the marriage relationship: the union between one man and one woman. We choose to vote against the passing of Bill 13.

Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** If we could just stop there, we do have to suspend the proceedings. There's a vote going on in the House that the members of the committee have to attend. So we will do that and we will be back after the vote to conclude your presentation and the presentation following that one. If you can just, as they say, hold that thought, we will be right back.

*The committee recessed from 1737 to 1751.*

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** If we could have everybody find their seats, we'll proceed with the hearings.

Thank you very much to the delegation for waiting for us. We've got the vote all completed, so now my full attention is back to you. The floor is yours.

**Ms. Ulma Lee:** My name is Ulma Lee. I am president of the Rose of Sharon Mission. That is a special name, but it is because in the Bible we see the rose of Sharon is pointing to Jesus. First, I like this name, and then the national flower of South Korea is the rose of Sharon. So I took this.

I was working about the last 10 years at this mission that they had mainly for the social issues among Korean society, working with Korean churches.

And now, this issue: I believe, government must work with the parents. If we ignore parents, nothing can be solved. So parents must work together—government and parents must work together to solve the problem of school bullying.

Parents teach their children all through their lives, but school teachers teach the children only a few years, and the school can teach children only when children allow them to teach them. So you must understand how parents are important.

Regarding this Bill 13, we request that the portion of the bill that is against the Christian teachings be removed from the bill. It means it can be amending Bill 13. But the problem with the portion of Bill 13 is that absolutely we cannot accept it as Christians.

The portion is, for example, from the Toronto District School Board curriculum, JK to grade 3. You read pages 37, 41, 44, 50, 53, 54, 56.

Now, apart from Bill 13, I prepared some old pictures. I think you all have these pictures. You will wonder why these old pictures have anything to do with Bill 13. I will explain very shortly.

When this issue came up, as you all remember, this newspaper, this National Post advertisement—I think everybody remembers. Do you remember seeing this advertised? When I see this in the newspaper and on television, I many times wept, looking at this picture. When I look at this little girl—so beautiful and innocent, like an angel. She is pleading to the adults, “Please don’t do that.” I was weeping, my tears streaming down. I wondered why I was so emotional, why I was weeping for this issue.

Then I find out—I was studying my psychology, and I find—around that time, a Korean gentleman issued a very precious book about Canadian missionaries to Korea: 100 Years of Canadian Mission in Korea. When I was looking at that book, I was weeping too. I am a very cold person; I rarely cry or weep. But I was weeping when I looked at these missionaries and at this little girl—the girl is weeping. Then I realize my heart, my spirit, is so deeply related with Canadian missionaries.

When I was in Korea, I didn’t know we had so many Canadian missionaries in Korea. During the last 100 years, we find out—the gentleman finds out—that we had 182 missionaries, but still more to be found.

Looking at that, how come—I was a Buddhist. My grandfather was a Buddhist. He built three large Buddhist temples in Korea, and he had seven concubines. It was a shame, but it was a reality of Korea 100 years ago. But after this missionary work, Korea changed completely. Now everybody knows: After the missionaries worked there, and died there, and were buried there, Korea did develop. Now Korea has large schools, hospitals, churches, and they are so much developed now that—

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** One minute left.

**Ms. Ulma Lee:** One minute. So I plead to you: Don’t think Christianity or the Bible or God—don’t think it is an old story, because I saw Christianity change Korea so much. It is a powerful book. God is an omnipotent, powerful being.

#### 1800

With this issue, I find that the fundamental issue is: Some people despise Christianity. That is the fundamental issue. Please respect all the traditions of western civilization. Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your presentation. We apologize for the break in between, but we do thank you for coming in and making your presentation.

MR. JAMES RYAN

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Our last presenter today is James Ryan. Thank you very much for coming in. As you’re finding your seat there, I would point out that you have 15 minutes for your presentation, to use as you see fit. If there’s time left at the end of your presentation, we will have the members of the committee ask their questions. If you would, when you start your presentation, give your name so Hansard can record it.

With that, thank you very much for coming in, and the floor is yours.

**Mr. James Ryan:** Thank you, Mr. Hardeman. I certainly appreciate the opportunity the standing committee has granted me to appear. I realize I’m in the unenviable position here of standing between you and your supper tonight, even more so since the ringing of the bells, but let me first of all explain who I am and what I do. My name is James Ryan. I am a Catholic teacher with the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Over the past 21 years I have taught at all grade levels, from grade 1 to OAC. In high school, I’ve taught English, history and also special education. I’ve spent time teaching at Sunnybrook—it was Sunnybrook and Women’s College Hospital back then, but it’s now Sunnybrook Hospital—in the adolescent psychiatric ward. I am currently a teacher in Toronto and I’m teaching in a learning disabilities classroom, which was quite interesting today, having to juggle the responsibilities of the teacher in charge and having a shortage of staff and having to contend with that, and designing lesson plans that required a lot of one-on-one assistance. So I’m actually refreshed to be at the committee.

Today I’m going to talk primarily about Bill 13 and Bill 14, and not so much the bills themselves as much as the concept of bullying on the basis of sexual orientation, primarily in a Catholic school context.

I know that you started presentations yesterday and I’ve heard many of the comments in the presentations made, and I’d like to make a few clarifications, first of all.

Number one, I certainly, as a teacher for the last 21 years—actually, something I also forgot to mention: You may have recognized me from another role in the past. I am the past OECTA president, but I have returned to the classroom now, into the trenches. The first premise I start from is: All bullying is wrong. It doesn’t matter whether it’s bullying of LGBT students. It doesn’t matter if it’s bullying based on ageism, sexism, body size. It’s all wrong. I think that’s the premise from which we have to start, and I think both Bills 13 and 14 do that.

The other thing is, we’ve heard a lot of talk about the Toronto District School Board’s equity policy. I’d like to make it clear that neither Bill 13 nor Bill 14 has anything to do with that equity policy. They are separate documents, and that equity policy will exist in the Toronto District School Board regardless of what happens with these bills.

Also, I’d like to comment—this is more about Bill 13 as opposed to 14. This is not about sex education. It doesn’t deal with this. This is about keeping our kids safe at school. That’s the purpose of both these bills.

The other thing is, this is not just about the bullying of LGBTQ students; this is about the bullying of all children and all students, and it talks about that. But we certainly cannot deny that children, over the last many, many decades, probably since our school system existed, have suffered bullying because of their sexual orientation.

On the issue of gay-straight alliances, when I look at the bill—and in this case, we're talking about Bill 13 too—it does not compel any school to have a gay-straight alliance but allows students to have the opportunity to use that. Gay-straight alliances, which have existed in North America since—oh, it goes back to at least 1988—are a strategy to accomplish an environment that is free from homophobia. That's it. They aren't a club for orgies; they're not a recruitment agency; they're not anything like that. They are there to accomplish the goal of creating an environment that is free from homophobia, and they are one strategy to do that. I think, regardless of what the name of those organizations are, that should be something that's open to students.

I'd also like to address the issue of the Catholic community. We are a diverse community. We have many opinions. We don't have one opinion on, for instance, GSAs, or on a strategy to achieve an end to homophobia. One thing, if you do look at the catechism that we are committed to, is ending all unjust discrimination towards people of same-sex orientation. For some of us, we believe that GSAs are a good way to accomplish that.

In terms of bullying: When I look at bullying of students based on their sexual orientation, it is important that we protect this, not just to protect LGBT students, although that would be a good reason in itself, but this also protects students who have no idea what their sexual orientation is, and it protects students who are heterosexual as well. I can think of examples over the years of being in a classroom where I have seen students who—frankly, I had no idea what their sexual orientation was, but because they walked a little bit funny, because their voice was a little bit higher, because of some peculiarity, they were targeted by bullies. That was wrong; I certainly addressed that as a teacher; but it exists. We can't deny it; it exists. I think this potential legislation tries to make things better for all students, not just LGBT students but heterosexual students as well. That's critically important, as all students suffer from this, not just one group.

I can also remember, when I go back to my university days—and we won't talk about how long ago that was—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It was just yesterday, James.

**Mr. James Ryan:** That's right. When I was in my second degree, I remember being the academic don at one of the residences, an all-boys' residence at my university. Again, we had a student at that university whose voice was a little bit higher than everyone else's, and we had one bully in that residence who continued to bully that student. I remember him spray-painting that student's door. I apologize for the language I'll use, but he spray-painted on that door, "Fag go home." Luckily, in that residence, the proctor—who was a good guy; he went on to be a police officer later on—and the resident assistants got together, and we made sure that that student was expelled from residence. But I'll tell you that that student was so affected by what had happened to him that we had to move him to another residence where he would feel comfortable. That's the danger of homo-

phobia. And, as I say, it's a threat not just to LGBT students; it's a threat to all students.

I'd also like to talk a little bit about some of the perspectives from our Catholic educational community too. You'll notice I have copied in there a resolution by the Toronto Catholic student senate which was passed last year. You may recall that the Toronto Catholic school trustee was a woman by the name of Natalie Rizzo from Cardinal Carter Academy; she's now in university. I'm not going to go through this, but it talks about the concerns of the Catholic student senators in Toronto. I will say that this is not just the opinion of Catholic student senators in Toronto but it was shared by many Ontario Catholic student leaders. I certainly have talked to the president of the Catholic student trustees about this, and it was a big concern for them as well.

My own association, and I know you'll be hearing from my president on Monday, passed a resolution at our annual general meeting this year that read, "that the association support an inclusive learning and working environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, two-spirited, queer and questioning individuals." That motion, by the way, passed by over 90% of our delegates, which were about 640, I believe, in that range, and they came from across Ontario, from every Catholic school board in Ontario.

I've also included in my handout a document I pulled off the Internet, but it was actually handed out to students in the Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Clarington Catholic school board, talking about sexual orientation. I know you're going to look at Bill 13 and 14, and probably there will be some amalgam that will come out of it, but I certainly encourage you to pass this legislation, and I encourage you to pass it with protection for our students who—on the basis of sexual orientation and to protect our students from homophobia.

I think these bills, which will eventually be one bill—this is about protecting our children and it's about loving our children. That's the only thing this is about. Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Thank you very much for your deputation. We only have about two minutes left. Who wants a question?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Why don't we just say: Thank you very much.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** I think that's a great idea. Thank you very much for your presentation.

**Mr. James Ryan:** Thank you for your time.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** We have surpassed the time where we normally would quit, but we thank you very much for taking the time and being here to speak to the committee.

The committee stands adjourned until—

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Just before you drop the gavel, Chair: Just as a confirmation, there will be a meeting of the subcommittee tomorrow after question period.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** That's arranged.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** In the opposition lounge.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Yes, in the opposition lounge—about Tuesday.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Oh, you're talking about the—it's about the 22nd?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Yes.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Oh, okay. Sure. Thank you. I can't stay because of the public hanging of Ernie Eves.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** The committee stands adjourned.

*The committee adjourned at 1813.*

## CONTENTS

Tuesday 8 May 2012

Accepting Schools Act, 2012, Bill 13, Ms. Broten / Loi de 2012 pour des écoles tolérantes, projet de loi 13, Mme Broten; Anti-Bullying Act, 2012, Bill 14, Ms. MacLeod / Loi de 2012 sur la lutte contre l'intimidation, projet de loi 14, Mme MacLeod.....	SP-53
Ms. Linda Beaudoin .....	SP-53
Network of Families' Concern .....	SP-55
Ms. Lynn Jackson	
Ms. Luvy Avila	
Ms. Iris Jones .....	SP-57
Ms. Iris Jones	
Parents as First Educators .....	SP-60
Mr. Joe Di Fonzo	
Concerned Citizens Against Child Pornography.....	SP-62
Ms. Judy Nuttall	
iEngage Bullying Prevention .....	SP-64
Mr. Anthony McLean	
Rose of Sharon Mission .....	SP-66
Ms. Ulma Lee	
Rev. David Inkoo Suh	
Mr. James Ryan.....	SP-67

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