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The Honorable Tim Walberg
Chair
Education and Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Robert “Bobby” Scott
Ranking Member
Education and Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chair Walberg, Ranking Member Scott, and Members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce:

The National Women’s Law Center Action Fund (NWLCAF) advocates for policy changes that protect and advance the legal rights and opportunities for women, girls, and all who face sex discrimination. As the sister organization of the National Women’s Law Center, NWLCAF has a particular interest in ensuring that educational opportunities for all students are not unlawfully restricted based on sex and that discrimination against LGBTQIA+ students, including transgender women and girls, is not perpetuated in the name of women’s rights.

As an organization dedicated to advancing gender justice, we strongly oppose the Parents Opt-in Protection Act (H.R. 4986) and oppose advancing this legislation out of Committee. H.R. 4986 would upend decades of thoughtful balance to disrupt data collection that supports schools in ensuring a safe learning environment. Since the 1970s, the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) has required parental notice and the option to opt-out of surveys on certain topics that K-12 schools decide to conduct. This bill would instead require that all surveys related to certain topics must be conducted under an “opt-in” approach, which will severely undermine student response to surveys like the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS).

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [estimate](#) that active parental permission, or “opt-in” approaches, generally reduce student response rates by as much as 50%. With less accurate information, school responses to various community priorities—including drug and alcohol abuse prevention and efforts to mitigate harassment and violence—will be hampered.

Every student deserves a school environment that is safe and free from harassment and violence. Congress should not be disrupting data collection efforts that inform efforts to improve school safety.

Sincerely,
National Women’s Law Center Action Fund