

February 25, 2025

Chair Steve A. Cwodzinski
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3207
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Cwodzinski and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

OutFront Minnesota, the state's largest LGBTQ+ advocacy organization, writes in support of SF 197 (Maye Quade). Founded in 1987, OutFront Minnesota has sought to build power within Minnesota's LGBTQ+ communities and address inequities through intersectional organizing, advocacy, education, and direct support services. We believe that SF 197, by amending the school board membership requirements, addresses the inequitable representation for students by allowing for two (2) student board members, which will improve the decision making process for and include the voices of *all* Minnesotans.

OutFront Minnesota recognizes the importance of students and young people's voices in advocacy and decision making. OutFront's, and the larger LGBTQ+ movement, has been powered by students and young people across demographic and socioeconomic communities collectively working towards equality, representation, and access. That is why Minnesota school boards, governing bodies that make decisions for and about the education and welfare of *all* Minnesota students and young people, should have representation from and include students and young people.

We believe that SF 197 will benefit every Minnesotan by including the in-school experience of students and young people, of all backgrounds including LGBTQ+, in how policies impact the learning process and ways that it and the holistic & extracurricular experience of students can improve.

By allowing for student school board participation, *all* Minnesotans benefit from the dialogue and policy feedback. OutFront Minnesota, throughout our history, understands the value of Minnesota's students and young people in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. And, this will be true for Minnesota education rights and policy.

OutFront Minnesota stands in support of SF 197 and we encourage your committee to vote YES on SF 197. The time is now to ensure that *all* Minnesotans have a voice in Minnesota education policy.

Sincerely,

Kat Rohn
Executive Director