



# Idaho House of Representatives

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October 26, 2021

ISBA President  
Jody Hendrickx  
P.O. Box 9797  
Boise, ID 83707-4797

Dear Jody Hendrickx:

We the undersigned members of the Idaho Legislature, request your prompt attention in the matter regarding the September 29<sup>th</sup> letter from the National School Board Association (NSBA) to the Biden administration. We are deeply concerned about the future of education in Idaho. We support excellence in education, a positive work environment where teachers are valued and effective, expanded opportunities for students, and active and involved parents (primary stakeholders) who are supported and encouraged by their school district in the education of their children.

Because of the recent message and actions by the NSBA, we urge the Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA) to formally withdraw membership/affiliation with the NSBA.

The NSBA's letter to President Biden falsely claimed that school boards were "under an immediate threat" from attendees of local school board meetings across the United States. This letter also

requested that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and other agencies, initiate the investigation of parents and stakeholders, citing news articles about, in the association's own words, "extremist hate organizations showing up at school board meetings."

Examples given by the NSBA, are actually very different than represented. The NSBA's letter gives an example about the arrest of a very frustrated father from Virginia whose ninth-grade daughter was sexually assaulted in a school bathroom by a newly identified transgender male. This student was transferred to another school where he committed a similar assault. The father's frustrations stemmed from officials' repeated negligence and inaction.

The Association's letter is filled with the labeling of parents and stakeholders as domestic terrorists, with no evidence to justify that term. The reality is that parents and stake holders are beyond frustrated with being ignored by their local school boards and left out of the conversations and decision making. The NSBA fails to recognize that Americans are angered with what is happening in our classrooms. Many Idaho legislators continue to receive calls, emails, and messages from parents telling us that they are being ignored and/or silenced by their local school boards.

After immense public pressure, the NSBA issued an apology regarding their letter. Unfortunately, this letter comes a little too late. The NSBA already revealed their desires, making this apology seem insincere and forced. The apology from the NSBA in no way changes the need for the ISBA to withdraw its membership.

Attorney General Merrick Garland's subsequent memorandum indulging NSBA's attempt to intimidate these parents is a slap in the face. This federal-school board partnership to smear engaged citizens has already served to increase tensions at school board meetings and ultimately will chill the ability of those citizens to freely petition their government, a constitutional right, without fear of reprisal.

The Pennsylvania and Ohio School Board Associations have already voted to withdraw their membership from NSBA, and several other states are now looking into similar action. While we appreciate the ISBA making a statement distancing themselves from the NSBA, we believe that ending membership and affiliation is in the best interest of all involved in the State of Idaho, as it will be a clear statement concerning the NSBA's stance regarding parents and stakeholders. The message needs to be sent now that Idaho will not support organizations that are threatening, antagonizing, and un-American towards concerned parents.

Since Idaho is a great state, thousands of people move here for a better life. The Idaho way supports freedom, dedication to family values, active and engaged citizens, self-governance, a sense of belonging and of community. We stand with parents and citizens in general who are involved, engaged and care enough to fight for a better and brighter future. We no longer see value of continued membership and call on the ISBA to immediately part ways with the NSBA due to the poor un-American actions of its leadership.

Signed,

Rep. Ben Adams

Rep. Kevin Andrus

Rep. Randy Armstrong

Rep. Vito Barbieri

Sen. Regina Bayer

Rep. Judy Boyle

Rep. Chad Christensen

Rep. Brent Crane

Rep. Gayann DeMordaunt

Sen. Lori Den Hartog

Rep. Sage Dixon

Rep. Barbara Ehardt

Rep. Greg Ferch

Rep. Terry Gestrin

Rep. Priscilla Giddings

Rep. Karey Hanks

Rep. James Holtzclaw

Rep. Mike Kingsley

Rep. Ron Mendive

Rep. Jason Monks

Rep. Dorothy Moon

Rep. Mike Moyle

Rep. Ron Nate

Rep. Tammy Nichols

Rep. Joe Palmer

Rep. Heather Scott

Rep. Charlie Shepherd

Rep. Bruce Skaug

Sen. Mary Souza

Sen. Steven Thayn

Sen. Steve Vick

Rep. Tony Wisniewski

Rep. John Vander Woude

Rep. Julianne Young

Sen. Christy Zito