

March 1, 2021

Dear Chair and Members of the House Committee on Education,

My name is Patricia Koss and I am a parent of two recent high school graduates from Clackamas County schools. I am writing in support HB 2631 which prescribes notification requirements for school districts upon receipt of an act of harassment, bullying or cyberbullying. I am doing so on behalf of Carson Bride and his family.

Carson, a bright and engaging 16 year old, loved deeply by his family, succumbed to suicide in June 2020. My sons played with Carson and his brother Jack throughout their elementary school years and I have been good friends with Tom and Kristin Bride over the last 15 years or so. Obviously the pain of losing Carson is unimaginable to those of us who have not walked that path. But many families in our community do include children who are vulnerable to Carson's fate. Through our parenting years, Kristin and I have leaned on each other as we helped our sons maneuver through a variety of social and educational challenges. We have encountered teachers, counsellors, and coaches over the years, some of whom were wonderfully nurturing and inspiring, playing very positive roles in our children's growth and development.

But, of course, there are no stronger advocates for our children than their own parents. Tom and Kristin were fierce advocates for Carson. No matter the curve ball, they were there to intelligently evaluate their options, and with nothing but Carson's well-being as an objective, choose a course of action. They have been, by far, the most dedicated members of Team Carson. Tragically, they were not informed of the many incidents where Carson was marginalized or bullied at school in the months before his death, preventing them from taking a course of action that may very well have saved his life.

Tom and Kristin Bride are now advocating for OUR children, asking everyone they know to support this bill. HB 2631 ensures that more parents do not lose the opportunity to help support their own children through their most vulnerable years.

Please pass HB2631!

Sincerely,

Patricia Koss
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