



For Immediate Release

May 6, 2013

Contact: Jean Heyer
612-701-3874 / jheyer@outfront.org

**SAFE & SUPPORTIVE MINNESOTA SCHOOLS ACT PASSES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

St. Paul, May 6, 2013 – The Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act (House File 826) passed the House of Representatives this evening by a vote of 72 Democrats in favor and 57 Republicans against.

This comprehensive, anti-bullying bill, based on recommendations from Governor Dayton’s Task Force on the Prevention of School Bullying, will require Minnesota school districts to adopt policies to protect all students and provide adequate support for teachers and other adults to effectively implement policies to keep students safe.

“All students should be allowed to spend their day learning, making friends and being inspired about their future,” states Monica Meyer, Executive Director of OutFront Minnesota, one of the founding members of the Safe Schools for All Coalition. “Passing the Safe Schools Act in the House is a big step toward making this a reality. The bill will help create an educational environment that is safe and free from bullying and harassment.”

The bill includes clear definitions of bullying, harassment and intimidation; enumerated protections for students who are most likely to be bullied or harassed; training and resources for students, staff, and school volunteers on bullying prevention and intervention; and specific procedures school staff must follow when bullying is reported.

The bill also calls for the establishment of a School Climate Center to be created within the Department of Education that will provide assistance for schools, parents, and students; policy review and development; data collection and analysis of reported bullying; identification of emerging trends; and support for school sites recovering from incidents.

The Senate Education Finance Committee has scheduled a hearing for the Safe Schools Act for tomorrow, Tuesday, May 7, at 8:30 am at the Capitol in Room 112. A vote by the Senate is expected within the next few weeks.

The Safe Schools for All Coalition is a group of over 80 education, disability, youth, religious, LGBT and social service organizations, as well as individuals. The Coalition supports the passage of comprehensive legislation that requires all Minnesota school districts to adopt policies to protect all students and provide adequate support for teachers to effectively implement policies to keep students safe.

###