

Suggested testimony for UU's to speak against the repeal of Policy 5756/removing prior student protections at BOE/community meetings.

Good evening, my name is _____ and I am here both as a member of the local Unitarian Universalist congregation and a concerned resident. My faith and values call me to speak out today on the importance of protecting the inherent worth and dignity of all people, all students at our schools.

Of course everyone wishes that all parents would be supportive of the struggles their children are dealing with. But as we know, not every child that is different has a family that is supportive. NJ state data shows that a significant percent of transgender youth say they are not supported by their families, and that a portion of youth have encountered violence at home. All transgender and nonbinary youth are potentially under attack by the desire to repeal Policy 5756. School staff can't possibly know in advance which families are supportive of their transgender and nonbinary youth. By repealing 5756 we run the risk that these students whose families are not supportive will no longer be safe at home. That is not a risk that we as a community should be taking with some of our most vulnerable youth.

[Insert here language specific to the local school board if desired.]

Love is central to my faith. Love for every student should be central to every school and school board. Please show love, not hate to all our students, so they may be safe every day.

(Adapted with permission from Rev. Rosemarie Newberry)