

STATE SENATOR • GLENN S. ANDERSON • 6TH DISTRICT

Anderson Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Jun 29, 2009

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Anderson Introduces Bill to Protect Students' Civil Rights

Recent Supreme Court Decision Reinforces Need to Protect Kids

LANSING- State Senator Glenn S. Anderson has introduced a bill that would prohibit any person employed or contracted by a public school from conducting a strip search or cavity search of a student. It would also prohibit the removing or arranging any of a student's clothing in order to conduct a visual inspection of the student.

"It is very important that we work to make our schools safer for all students, but school officials shouldn't be grossly violating students' rights in order to do so," said Sen. Anderson. "It is important to recognize and establish this boundary. If we are to instill sound values in our young people, we should deal with them in the same reasonable and respectful manner we treat adults."

The need for this legislation to address this issue became apparent after a recent and widely covered incident involving a 13-year-old girl who was strip searched by school officials due to a suspicion that she was in possession of prescription strength Ibuprofen. Although these suspicions proved to be baseless, the young girl was traumatized at the humiliation of having to remove her clothes in front of complete strangers. The school chose not to involve law enforcement officers or seek permission of the young girl's parents before conducting the search. Yesterday, the United State Supreme Court ruled that the school's strip search had violated the girl's rights.

These practices represent a very dangerous possibility for the wrongful search of a minor. To protect students from potential abuse, this legislation would require that any type of personal inspection of a student should be conducted by the proper authorities for the purpose of obtaining criminal evidence regardless of perceived innocence or guilt.

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