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Dear Chair Torres-Fossett and Members of the Assembly Education Committee,

My name is Carissa Pearce and I represent the Children's Advocacy Alliance. We are a nonpartisan, independent voice for Nevada's children with a mission to ensure every child in Nevada thrives.

I am submitting this letter in **strong support of AB 205** using passive consent for sexual education so that more students have access to the critical information they need to make healthy, informed decisions. Research shows that teens who do not receive comprehensive sexual education are at a significantly higher risk of unintended pregnancy. Without access to medically accurate information, youth and teens are more likely to rely on myths, misinformation, or social media instead of evidence-based education. This cycle continues with children of teen parents who are more likely to face behavioral challenges, struggle in school, rely on public health care, and even experience foster care placement. Breaking this cycle starts with giving young people the knowledge and tools to make safe, informed choices about their health and future.

Comprehensive sexual education goes beyond preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, it teaches critical life skills like consent, communication, and healthy relationships, which are essential for teen mental health and long-term well-being. When young people learn about mutual respect, setting boundaries, and recognizing unhealthy relationship dynamics, they are better equipped to navigate personal relationships safely and confidently. Studies show that sexual education that includes lessons on consent and relationship skills can help reduce rates of intimate partner violence and sexual assault later in life. By empowering youth with the knowledge to build respectful, healthy relationships, we not only support their mental and emotional well-being, but we also take an important step toward reducing domestic violence and fostering safer communities for future generations.

Passive consent for sexual education ensures that students are included in these essential lessons while still respecting parental choice. An opt-in requirement creates unnecessary barriers, disproportionately affecting students from families who may not have the time, resources, or awareness to complete the extra paperwork. The result? The students who need this information most are the least likely to get it. This bill captures the students who have parents who are not actively involved in their child's education, and ensures they have access to factual, age-appropriate education that empowers them to protect their health and future.

This bill presents a system that is simple and effective to ensure no student is left behind simply because of administrative hurdles. I urge you to support this change so that all Nevada students have access to the education they need to make informed, responsible decisions. Thank you for your commitment to children.

Carissa Pearce, MPH
Government Affairs Manager
Children's Advocacy Alliance