

## Little-known law hurting Gay-Straight Alliances, supporters say

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SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (ABC4 News) – A 2007 law that requires a parent signature to join an extracurricular group in the state of Utah is drawing fresh criticism from those who say students who need support are facing an unnecessary barrier.

“We know these clubs have super huge benefits for kids in schools. We know they are literally life-saving,” said Alli Martin, vice-principal at Northwest Middle School in Salt Lake City.

“Putting the pressure on kids to out themselves to their parents, in order to access that life-saving support, is really unfair to the kid,” added Martin.

In 2007, a law called Student Clubs Act was passed by the state legislature. The requirements include the need for a signature to join any extracurricular club as a high school student in Utah.

“We’re the only state that does that. Only state,” said Martin.

By phone, we spoke to Utah Eagle Forum President Gayle Ruzicka, who was heavily involved in the legislation back in 2007.

“Anything that goes on in those schools, on that campus, parents should be involved and always know what their child is doing,” said Ruzicka. “And they send their children to the public schools expecting that. Expecting that their children — that they’ll always know what their children are doing.”