

March 28, 2023

RE: HB 119 County Boards of Education - Curriculum Guides and Courses of Study – Requirements

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, Senator Augutine, Senator Brooks, Senator Carozza, Senator Gallion, Senator Fry-Hester, Senator Lewis-Young, Senator Simonaire, Senator Washington and Senator Watson:

After HB 119 was amended from giving the State Board of Education the power to mandate how local systems teach the Maryland Health and Sex Education framework to full power over all curriculums, bad just became worse.

Not too long-ago Marylanders in many counties across the state lobbied for and won the right to have an elected local school board. Now the General Assembly is contemplating taking what local control has been granted to these local boards away and imposing what is called a framework but in reality, it is a state mandated curriculum—complete with hefty fines for non-compliance.

If HB 119 passes, what will be the role of the General Assembly? I am leaving the debate on the horrendous mandates to teach gender differences to our kindergartens to others. The General Assembly will become the arbiters of everything that is taught. Get ready to have 100s of bill ideas flooding your offices by liberals, conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, teachers' unions, and those just with a “good” idea. And of course, the number of local bills supported by county governments asking for small adjustments to the “framework” will certainly increase. The hours of the 90 days session spent on the curriculum bills will be mind-numbing. Then add the hours you will spend handling the disputes on the fines imposed... these fines will not be limited to those counties that were targeted because of the way they chose to implement the health curriculum now we are adding all curriculums.

HB 119/SB 199 as originally introduced was a bad idea. HB 119 as amended is worse. Taking away local decision capability and replacing the process by state mandate will not create a stronger Maryland school system. Please vote for an unfavorable report on HB 119.

Sincerely,  
Sallie Taylor  
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