

Written Testimony for HB119/ SB199: County Boards of Education - Curriculum Guides and Courses of Study - Requirements, Re-Titled From “Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework - Established” - Please HOLD in Committee & oppose this bill

I am writing today to urge you to vote against HB119/SB199. There is no defensible argument in support of this Bill. The onus is upon you to defend HB 119/SB199, and not upon your constituents to defend their positions against it.

Please review these main points:

- Parents have the fundamental right to know how and what their children are being taught in public schools.
- HB119 seeks to remove control from local school districts and boards of education.
- Parents are tax-paying citizens and have the right to observe and participate in determining the content and implementation of public school programs and curricula.
- Parents have the fundamental right to insist that content of public school curricula is factually sound and inclusion of new content based on new ideology and/or methodology is evidence-based and demonstrably leads to positive outcomes.
- Inclusion of gender ideology in public school curricula based on recent changes in public guidelines is linked to negative mental and physiological health outcomes for students.
- HB119 includes open-ended language which does not adequately safeguard parents' vital and fundamental right to protect their children from exposure to curricula including content on ideology that is not evidence-based and demonstrably causes negative outcomes.
- The recent Amendments added to HB 119/ SB 199 OVERRIDE the authority of local Boards of Education to mold curriculums and courses to respond to local needs and values, and they MANDATE adoption of the

State Board of Education policy and guidelines for every element of instruction, and they will PROHIBIT any student from opting out of instruction.

I have several questions related to these Amendments:

- WHY, then, did we elect local Boards of Education if the MSDE was going to dictate exactly what must be taught, come up with the curriculum that local Boards of Education cannot adapt to fit their districts' needs and values.
- WHY, then, since this is very sensitive and sexual information, are we as a state NOT ALLOWING for an OPT-OUT for any student?
- WHY, then, are we FORCING every child, ESPECIALLY SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS, TO HAVE TO PARTAKE IN THIS COMPLETELY SEXUALIZED CURRICULUM?

As a parent who lives in Frederick County, I'm sure you all are aware of the Department of Justice's investigation and audit into Frederick County Public Schools' "mistreatment" of their Special Education population by SECLUSION and RESTRAINT. (If not, please Google it. I'm sure you will have no trouble finding it!). This horrible legislation, and especially the Amendments, make it IMPOSSIBLE for the parents of any Special Education students to OPT-OUT of this curriculum for their already traumatized and vulnerable children!! Since the Department of Justice is already making recommendations for Frederick County Public School teachers, aides and other specialists, as well as supervisors, to teach this special population of students in a way more reasonable, less-traumatizing manner, which is the way they should have been taught all along, I cannot believe that our very own Maryland representatives are going to NOW FORCE THIS CURRICULUM DOWN THE THROATS OF OUR MOST SENSITIVE AND MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION OF STUDENTS, WITHOUT ANY CHOICE FOR OPT-OUT BY THE PARENTS OF THESE AMAZING STUDENTS!! (This may undoubtedly lead to lawsuits, or possibly further lawsuits, if there are already lawsuits from the "mistreatment" of these Special Education students to begin with).

I write backed by thousands of years of science, logic, reason, and tradition, which undeniably makes the case that transgender ideology, at a minimum, should not be taught or supported in any way by educators. While individuals have the right to express themselves how they choose, it's not your position to institutionalize fictional genders, nor to be legislating them into COMAR!

Moreover, under the Maryland constitution, as well as the United States constitution, this committee as a body has absolutely no right to limit or revoke the rights of parents. Parents have every right to parent, and their primary responsibility does not require permission from you or any legislative body. My position against HB 119/SB199 is supported by multitudes of quality publicly-available objective evidence, and not based on subjective experiences or notions.

Furthermore, my position is consistent with the rules of logic with no contradiction. And while I consider most of this bill morally reprehensible and an unnecessary waste of your time and our tax dollars, legislating untruths into the Maryland code should frighten all of us no matter how we stand on this bill. The American Psychological Association, along with the American Association of Pediatrics, should be ashamed of themselves. Many people make the claim that the American Association of Pediatrics, having a larger membership, has more clout: a false assertion. The American College of Pediatrics disagrees with this curriculum and disagrees with transgender treatments. The link for the position of The American College of Pediatrics in its entirety is here: <https://acpeds.org/position-statements/gender-dysphoria-in-children>

The research is absolute in consensus among the researchers that it's harmful and ridiculous. Pioneer Dr. Paul McHugh stated undeniably that the patient "needs their brains fixed, not their bodies," in his published longitudinal study. And just as big pharma sells drugs on TV, educators, social workers, and politicians are selling trans options to children and growing the problem.

It should be without question, that all individuals should be respected and treated kindly, but do we need to be spending Maryland taxpayer dollars to accommodate the hundreds of groups, narratives and agendas that may come down the pike in the future? Accepting gender fantasies is one thing, but condoning treatment that often leads to irreversible surgeries is another, and while it might appear as care that provides a child with some temporary relief, there are numerous post-treatment cases that have ended in traumatic mental and physical damage, deep regrets, and suicide. Have you been provided with proper long-term safety data of the mental and physical health effects on children, as a result of teaching and supporting gender ideology in schools? If not, don't just be a follower of this global trend and unwittingly let this Pandora's Box be further opened.

I would also like to remind you that MABE (the Maryland Association of Boards of Education) OPPOSES this bill as well. The link for their full statement is here: https://www.mabe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/HB119_MABEStatement_2023_03_08.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0Ds6A9NKSJogJhnh3x5gtRe0PPLw3ALBhiryYniINT676QAIL6hSE3C5M

As a member you have one intrinsic duty and that is to DO NO HARM and serve the common good. I ask that you reject this bill and any other legislation associated with it for the sake of our children and families. I remind you to uphold the Constitution and the unalienable rights of parents. And It's crucial that all education guidelines be based on reality, even if that means not being palatable for all individuals. I will not live by lies. I will not accept the lies that support this bill. I will not accept the lies that this Bill, or any associated curricula, is good for any child or any family. Please do the right thing and vote against HB 119/SB199!

Thank you!!

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals

A very concerned mother and Maryland resident