



Senate Bill 738 Cross-filed with HB 785

Title: Freedom to Read Act

Hearing Date: February 23, 2024

Position: UNFAVORABLE

Committee: Education, Energy and Environment

Moms for Liberty Maryland Legislative Committee requests an unfavorable report for SB 738. Deceptively titled, “Freedom to Read Act,” SB 738 will remove local control of school and public libraries and compel them to submit to State Standards. These state standards have reframed sexually explicit material as “Diverse” and “Inclusive.”

<https://www.youtube.com/clip/UgkxkMJFBkH5IFLMAaQaDR1iups-9FDZ5tNj>

Sexually explicit materials are finding their way into our school libraries based on these standards. Parents objecting to these materials are being labelled book banners. Moms for Liberty Maryland Legislative Committee does not condone censorship. All of the books on the American Library Association’s list of most challenged books are available in our public libraries and can be purchased freely. We have no problem with that. All these books are available to any adult who wants to give them to their children. Where we do have a problem is when these graphic and sexually explicit materials wind up in our public school libraries.

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/2023/09/28/harford-county-board-of-education-member-names-six-books-that-concerned-parents-deem-inappropriate/>

No amount of diversity sanitizes sexually explicit content from children's eyes. Pornography cast through a lens of "representation" is still pornography. Parents and taxpayers have the first amendment right to petition their local school board when they have a concern about a book that contains age inappropriate material. This does not make them book banners. This is what responsible parents do—protect their children's innocence. This legislation will usurp local control and infringe on parent's rights to direct the education of their children. The argument from the proponents of this legislation is that we must trust the professionals. These professionals have knowingly put inappropriate material in our school libraries and now they look to legislation to protect them from liability and to keep the pipeline of obscene materials flowing. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2023/09/15/american-library-association-book-bans/>

Carroll County Board of Education has unanimously passed a policy to ensure that age inappropriate materials were removed from their media centers/school libraries. This local decision has been met with cries of censorship and book banning. <https://www.wmar2news.com/local/carroll-county-school-board-oks-change-prohibiting-sexually-explicit-content>

This legislation is an attempt to remove the local control of the Carroll County Board of Education and other Boards of Education and force them to follow the State Standards. This is the loophole those with an agenda to sexualize our children will use if this bill is passed. The American Library Association and MD State Standards are responsible for putting these sexually explicit materials in our school libraries now. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/american-library-association-president-marxist-lesbian-rcna98254>

Parents are losing patience with this radical attempt to expose our children to material many find offensive and far from educational.

Rasmussen Research found that 77% of voters are concerned that school age children are being exposed to sexual material that is not age appropriate.

https://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/partner_surveys/voters_against_obscene_books_in_public_schools

When it comes to the professional best equipped to determine what is appropriate for children, parents trump librarians every time. Please respect parents rights to direct the education and upbringing of their children and to retain local standards for school and public libraries. This legislation is unnecessary.

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Respectfully submitted,

Suzie Scott

Chair

Moms for Liberty Maryland Legislative Committee