

March 3, 2025

Mara R. Greengrass
Rockville, MD 20852

TESTIMONY ON HBI385 - POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
Children - Parental Rights - Educational Rights

TO: Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Mara Greengrass

My name is Mara Greengrass. I'm a resident of District 18 and I'm submitting this testimony in opposition to HBI385, which would harm children, families, and our educational system.

As an extremely involved parent, I hope that you will see the dangers inherent in this bill. Under the guise of "parental rights", the sponsors want to remove the rights of children to an expansive education, remove the rights of parents like me to ensure our children are properly educated, and destroy our amazing public schools.

Students don't live in a bubble and they certainly won't live in one after they graduate. Especially when it comes to middle and high school students, it's unconscionable that we would prevent them from joining clubs and school activities just because their parents said so.

This bill would also create an extreme burden on already overloaded school systems. Anyone who thinks it's easy to provide "all curricula and instructional materials" for each student has never been in a classroom or spoken to a teacher. Instructional materials change depending on many factors, including current events, substitute teachers, weather delays, or children moving between reading groups. Each child would need an individual list that would have to be updated regularly. When do teachers have time to do that?

Lastly, this bill is an attempt to censor schools, to make educators so afraid of upsetting parents that they're unwilling or unable to teach about anything that might be considered controversial by anyone in their community. Section IV's requirement of parental consent to use a child's correct pronouns is the dead giveaway, because that has nothing to do with parental rights. If my son wants to be called "George of the Jungle" in school, that's between them and their teacher.

If we truly want to protect our children, we will respect their right to some privacy and concentrate on educating them, rather than worrying that they might learn something about

people unlike themselves. **I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on HBI385.**