

I am writing to oppose the HB 119/SB199, Primary and Secondary Education- Health Education Framework. The bill requires all counties, without consent of their citizens, to create an “age-appropriate” curriculum consistent with the Comprehensive Health Education Framework. In the state’s view, teaching young children to question their gender or teaching 7th grade students to identify “solo, vaginal, anal and oral sex along with the possible outcomes of each” is appropriate. Many parents strongly disagree.

If the committee decides to pass this bill, which I think would be a heavy handed attempt to steal the rights of the locals to design their curricula, I hope that at least there will be an “opt in” amendment which would allow parents to decide to let their child participate in the units in the Family Life and Human Sexuality or Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Units. This will allow parents to decide what they want their children to be taught, not the state. This is critical with such controversial and sensitive content.

An “opt out” option will not be viable unless school systems bear the burden of making sure every parent knows about that option and are given every opportunity to exercise it. That means more than just posting a form online or sending a slip home in a student’s backpack. It means making the same effort that would be required in signing students up for free and reduced lunch or a field trip.

Above all, this law will take away local control of the schools, by-passing elected school boards and forcing them to adopt a curriculum that many of their citizens do not want.

Do not pass this bill. But, if you make the mistake of passing it, include an “opt in” amendment.

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