



House Bill 25
Public Schools - Sexually Explicit Materials - Prohibited in Libraries and Media Centers
January 31, 2024
Oppose

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

The Trans Rights Advocacy Coalition (TRAC) is submitting this testimony in strong opposition to HB25, which uses ‘sexually explicit materials’ as a smokescreen to erase LGBTQ+ people and other marginalized groups from our school libraries.

TRAC is a Maryland-based and entirely trans-led coalition committed to ensuring that all transgender and gender expansive Marylanders can live safe and affirming lives. Our membership includes organizers, attorneys, academics, educators, librarians, healthcare providers, and other community members who all stand in strong opposition to any attempt to ban books in our school libraries.

This type of censorship, motivated by bigotry and hatred, has no place in Maryland. Removing representation of LGBTQ+ people from school libraries will directly harm [already vulnerable and marginalized students](#) across our state. This representation has a [direct impact](#) on the level of acceptance that young LGBTQ+ find in their classrooms and homes.

Nobody can say it better than the [students themselves](#):

“I personally believe that removing books about sexual assault, gender, sexuality, and racism is not right. Having access to those types of books is important because it helps us as students learn more about people’s perspectives and helps us become more open-minded in the real world. To put it in another way—if we are not exposed to books that discuss the struggles of people all around our country, then it limits us from understanding each other. Sometimes the content can be uncomfortable to read, but it is necessary to understand the lives of others.”

— Hilary, Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School, Maryland

At a time when LGBTQ+ people are under attack across the country, and particularly in many of our neighboring states, Maryland must remain a safe haven for us. We cannot allow these insidious attempts to erase queer and other marginalized stories from our history.

For all these reasons and many more, the Trans Rights Advocacy Coalition is in strong opposition to HB25 and respectfully urges the committee to return an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,
The Trans Rights Advocacy Coalition