

## Testimony for HB25 Public Schools Sexually explicit materials prohibited in libraries & Media Centers

Hello Chairperson Vanessa Atterbeary & Vice Chairperson Jheanelle Wilkins, Committee members & guests. My name is Sharon Blinder Hill. I am here to oppose House Bill 25. Both of my children attended Montgomery County Public Schools.

American Courts have ruled that students do have 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment Rights. Students have the Right to Learn and to have Free Access to Information. Intellectual freedom is essential in a Democratic society.

Parents who want to censor Childrens' access to information by banning books that they consider "offensive" or "uncomfortable" are trying to impose their personal views on everyone else. The result of censorship is a more hostile society towards those individuals who are considered "different." All youth are harmed, not just queer and/or LGBTQ+ youth, when inclusive teaching is banned.

Ignorance of our common humanity leads to a skewed education in which children become afraid to examine other points of view or, even worse, seek out incorrect sources of information to answer their own personal questions. Our goal should be to teach children to have an open mind, to seek knowledge and to not limit themselves to only one cultural understanding. Every child needs to be able to find themselves in a book, to find inspiration and to find hope.

Vote NO to HB 25. Thank you.