

House Bill 558 - FAVORABLE with Amendments
Ways and Means Committee

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee;

I ask that you give House Bill 558, regarding public school health education, a Favorable report with amendments. The amendments that I'd like to see are to make the topics "Family Life and Human Sexuality" and "Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation" mandatory as opposed to elective.

There should no more be a way to opt out of the important, factual lessons that can be found in sexuality education courses than to opt out of lessons about evolution, climate change, that the earth is spherical, that humans have visited the moon, that vaccines are effective, or that racism exists. One's personal beliefs shouldn't determine what they're taught in a public school system. Those parents and guardians who don't want for their children to participate in all of the aspects of public education should send their children to private schools or homeschool them. If they don't believe that those are options, then they can have discussions with their children at home about what they've learned that day, and share any conflicting beliefs at that time. But the schools shouldn't be facilitating ignorance and prejudice. That's not what education is supposed to be about.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Debi Jasen
Pasadena, MD