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Subject: HB0282

As a concerned citizen, a grandparent of a Cecil County Public School student and as a County Council member for Cecil County, I am asking for a FAVORABLE position on HB0282. I agree that books are important resources. However, to expose young children to sexually explicit instructional materials and books containing graphic sexual content is inappropriate.

Such content is not age appropriate for PreK-8 as well as some 9-12 students. There are high school students that may be intellectually prepared to absorb such content while other students could suffer emotionally or physically. Students that unable to understand such material become confused and conflicted with self-identity leading to depression and mental health issues. There may also be confusion about what is and is not appropriate sexual behavior, especially with children who are sexually abused in the home or community. Shoving this type of content in the faces of young, impressionable children desensitizes them to sexual acts that we would consider illegal and completely inappropriate.

Instructing any child about sexual content such as pedophilia, ways to engage in sexual acts between heterosexuals or even LGBTQ students and discussing gender options are all topics that should be discussed between parents and their children. Parents have the right to instill their family values related to such topics.

If parents want their child to have access to sexually explicit materials, they are free to take their child to the public library. Schools should not be engaging in instruction of any kind related to these topics and such materials should not be available to children in school libraries or media centers within classrooms.

What happened to "good touches, bad touches"? Basic reproductive systems are all that should be taught in schools. Family values should be at the forefront of educating children about these topics, which is a parental responsibility. Allow the parents to have these discussions and remove such conversations from the classroom. There are more important instruction students need at this point in their lives to prepare them for college or a career. Let us make that a top priority, NOT sexual behavior, and gender options.

For these reasons, I request a FAVORABLE position on HB0282.

Donna Culberson