

## **OPPOSE [HB710](#) Criminal Law - Display of Obscene Material to Minors**

Hearing date: 3/5/26 at 1 pm in House Judiciary

Dear Chairperson Bartlett, Vice Chairperson Davis and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

We represent the Coalition for LGBTQ+ Students; we are a grassroots organization that supports LGBTQIA youth in Anne Arundel County through education, advocacy and policy. **We OPPOSE HB710 and urge you to give it an unfavorable report.**

Our Coalition is made up of parents, educators, mental health professionals, students and community members who work to protect children and enhance their safety in their schools and communities. Obviously, we do not want any child to be exposed to pornography or sexual content that is dangerous.

However, we are very concerned about the ramifications of HB710 in terms of censorship and book banning. Definitions of "obscenity" or "harmful to minors" are subjective, they are often weaponized against materials with any LGBTQIA content. Similar laws in other states have specifically included homosexuality in their definitions of sexual conduct, leading to the removal of books featuring LGBTQIA themes. HB710 could easily be used to censor materials in school libraries so that no information about LGBTQIA people is available. We fear that even non-explicit, age-appropriate materials (like books featuring same-sex parents or trans youth) could be challenged and removed from schools, effectively erasing LGBTQ+ representation. This harms children.

It is essential for students from underrepresented communities to have access to materials that depict their own lived experience. All children, and especially youth from marginalized groups, need to see representations of themselves in school. This helps them grow and mature, understand themselves better, and develop a clear sense of their identity and sense of self. It helps to prepare them for adulthood. It helps all children understand and appreciate the rich diversity of people in the world.

Our schools and libraries already have robust procedures in place to determine what materials should be available in schools. We trust our educators and librarians to make informed, thoughtful decisions about resources in schools. They have the expertise to determine which materials are appropriate for children at different age levels. HB710 is completely unnecessary as well as potentially harmful.

**For all these reasons, we urge you to give an unfavorable report on HB710.**

Sincerely,

The Coalition for LGBTQ+ Students  
[www.coalition4lgbtqstudents.org](http://www.coalition4lgbtqstudents.org)

