

The Honorable Ron Highland
Chair of Education Committee

I speak in support of the 'opt in' Sex Ed bill HB 2199.

Sexuality is a very important topic. Parents should be in full control in a supervisory role for decisions where their children are concerned for all of their educational experience, which includes sex education. Not all parents want that role and will defer to the school to make those decisions.

However, no parents or legal guardians should be prohibited from making those decisions by laws that obstruct their ability to do so or are crafted in such a way to make it easier to conceal materials that will impact their children. By having a Sex Ed bill be 'opt out' it gives the school the upper hand and more power.

Last week, parental testimony in opposition to returning the *Communities That Care* survey to 'opt out' was that before last year, which was the first year it was changed to 'opt in', the family was never contacted that the survey was going to be given and if they didn't want their students to take it, they needed to opt them out. The parent has 5 children and the two now in college definitely remember taking the test but the parents were never notified when they took it.

I am reading a book called, *Hooked: New Science on How Casual Sex is Affecting Our Children* by Joe S. McHaney, Jr MD and Freda McKissic Bush, MD.

An excerpt: ...scientists are confirming that sex is more than a momentary physical act. It produces powerful, even lifelong, changes in our brains that direct and influence our future to a surprising degree. Through the mounds of scientific data this book simply demonstrates that:

Sexual activity releases chemicals in the brain, creating emotional bonds between partners; breaking these bonds can cause depression and make it harder to bond with someone else in the future.

As important as this subject is and because it is important, parents and legal guardians should have the power and position of the authority in the education of their children.

I ask you to vote opt in HB 2199 favorably out of committee.

Phillis Setchell
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