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I write in opposition to SB 17. This bill is another means by which legislators are attempting to themselves create curriculum rather than relying on those who know how to create curriculum and teach that curriculum.

1) The content of curriculum must not be legislated. That is the opposite of the academic freedom necessary for democracy to flourish.

2) Legislating that the classes in financial literacy sing the praises of the “free market” is indoctrination. We can teach children how to manage finances, spending and saving, the stock market, and other things they should know for daily life in a society wherein the economy is primarily organized through free market principles. However, our society is not “purely” organized around “free market” principles. We have many ways of distributing and redistributing what we produce and the consequent profit. How will students understand the principles behind Social Security if they are always only hearing that the free market is the best and only way to organize our economy? Whether one agrees with having a Social Security program or not, students deserve to learn about it, not only about arguments that would kill it.

Not only is this bad content. It mixes what should be academic content (Economics) with “training” content.” Students are not in school to be trained. They are in school to learn to think **about** the society they live in so as to become thoughtful citizens.

Please dismiss this legislation as what it is: another means by which to indoctrinate children. Financial literacy is not Economics curriculum. The principles of the “free market” should be taught in a classroom wherein children are also learning about other ways to organize the economy. If they grow up understanding the principles of the free market rather than “believing” in it, we will sustain our democratic freedom of thought and expression and create a better society based in real debate rather than ideological intransigence.