

I am writing to question some of the language in HB8 and oppose the bill for its vagueness and aims at censorship. Would the law require educators and schools to disclose teaching about Susan B. Anthony and the fight for women's right to vote? Would teachers be allowed to call George Washington a man? Would such a law require educators and schools to disclose when they are teaching about a heterosexual relationship between John and Abigail Adams? The bill's definitions of "sexuality content" and "gender ideology" are horribly vague and could confuse educators and schools. If the bill is trying to outlaw the teaching of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender history, art, and culture, which the bill should not do, it should make clear its intentions. Any course on history is going to have content about gender and sexuality—the question is which kind of content. It's not possible to outlaw the teaching of sexuality content and gender ideology, since sexuality and gender are part of history and culture. Educators as experts in their respective fields should have some discretion in terms of what they teach. To require advanced disclosure is a strain on our already hard-working educators. And the bill's vagueness makes it likely to encourage educators to censor themselves, even around teaching basic parts of history. When school funding and resources are limited, it seems like a gross imposition and waste of resources to ask schools to attempt to monitor the teaching of gender and sexuality.

Best,
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