

Angela Dockery
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Written Opposition Testimony

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am an educator and parent with over 20 years experience serving youth and young adults.

I would like to convey my opposition to SB 156 regarding teaching the “Success Sequence” in schools. Wanting youth to have successful lives is noble. But as any parent or guardian of a teenager knows, youth don’t want to be told what to do. They want to be validated, understood and feel supported as they stumble through choices and decisions in the same way we all have at this point in our lives.

This bill would fall short of its intentions because it lays a prescription for thousands of teen lives in this state without seeking to validate, understand or support the myriad of circumstances youth find themselves in. Youth want to be heard and supported to make their own decisions, and to generate their own choices based on causes and effects particular to their own lives to be agents of their own futures. We need to leave counseling youth to professionals licensed to counsel them instead of putting that burden on the state, school districts, and teachers.

Additionally, this bill will take educational resources away from other more immediately applicable instruction. Our schools need to strengthen job training instruction, strengthen partnerships with businesses for career path learning, create more career academies and trade schools in districts that lack them close by, or include driver’s education in high school. All of these options would give students agency and choice which build internal motivation for youth to pursue their goals.

I am in opposition to SB 156 as it fails to include youth as agents of their own futures and decision making, pulls resources from other programs and increases financial costs to the state and school districts.

Thank you.