



Mission:

EYEJ drives social justice reform by empowering young people to advocate for change.

Vision:

An equitable and inclusive world.

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Opponent Testimony for House Bill 322
From EYEJ, the EYEJ Youth Council and Arnav
Khanna, Youth Council Member Co-Lead

State and Local Government Committee
September 21, 2021

To:

Chairman Wiggam

Vice Chairwoman John

Ranking Member Representative Kelly

Members of the State and Local Government Committee

Thank you for allowing me and the EYEJ Youth Council to testify today. EYEJ drives social justice reform by empowering young advocates for change. The EYEJ Youth Council focuses on positive system change to empower other young people. We have focused on police reform, toxic stress, and over the last 1.5 years, helping to close the Digital Divide.

My name is Arnav Khanna. I am a Youth Council Member Co-Lead for Empowering Youth Exploring Justice (EYEJ) and the EYEJ Youth Council and I strongly oppose House Bill 322.

I understand why one may believe it can be uncomfortable for children to discuss racism and other controversial topics in school. However, without these discussions, children are not taught the true history of America. As a student myself, properly learning about racism in America

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has taught me what is wrong and how people can learn from past mistakes. Racism may never go away, but by limiting the points of views taught to students is limiting what they can learn and the impact they can have on their community. For example, one of the prohibited topics is “One race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex.” Although you may believe this can teach the supremacy of a race, it actually denies children a proper explanation of their country’s history and even their own background. It is a school’s job to teach important lessons and morals, not cut corners and avoid sensitive topics.

It is also a school’s job to support its students. If this bill is passed, students will not be given an opportunity to discuss important matters around race and sex that surround their lives. Schools are meant to provide children with an open environment to express themselves, but this bill does the opposite.

As a student and someone who supports my peers being taught the true history of this nation, I ask you to strongly consider my testimony opposing HB 322 and vote NO on this bill.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Arnav Khanna

Youth Council Member Co-Lead on behalf of EYEJ and the EYEJ Youth Council