

Ephren Taylor

HB 2236

3/9/2023

Room 144S

Oral Testimony

Hi, my name is Ephren Taylor, and I've been a Kansas resident all my life. As has been stated before, if parents want to get involved, there are already local policies for them to do that. I oppose this bill because of its vagueness. It allows parents to withdraw from a class if it impairs the parent's sincerely held beliefs, values, or principles and to withdraw their student from the class or educational program in which the material or activity is being provided.

I'm a huge fan of saying things plain. We know what the goal of this bill is. Some people believe that schools are turning kids gay, teaching them to hate white people, or indoctrinating them into communism or Marxism. This bill would open the floodgates for parents to opt their children out of history classes that include discussions about gay rights, for example, just because they have strong beliefs against it.

I don't care about their beliefs. I know from history that there was a time in this country when parents objected to teaching racial equality in schools or racial integration. They even quoted their holy books to justify it. Thank God we ignored those people's strongly held beliefs and continued on the path we are today. We should be proud that our education system has moved generations forward. Kids with bigoted beliefs went to school, got an education, and came out as upstanding Kansans who value their peers regardless of their skin color.

Today, we face a similar struggle. Parents are objecting to teaching about LGBTQ people in schools, and many of them use their holy books to justify it. If we allow these objections to be accepted, then we are on a slippery slope. Imagine how much slower America's generation would have progressed if parents could take their kids out of classes that taught racial equality and black history. Bills like this are the first step in the process of allowing bigoted parents to remove their children from classes that go against their beliefs, leading to another generation of kids who don't grow past their parents.

We only have to look to history to see the danger in this. In Nazi Germany, the regime eliminated teachers who went against their deeply held beliefs and established new schools and curricula designed to promote their beliefs. Teachers and professors were dismissed, and minority students were gradually excluded from schools and universities. Bills like this are the first step towards establishing a regime that controls education and stifles progress and are just the beginning of the republican party's agenda.

For these reasons, I strongly oppose this bill and encourage you all to do the same.