



H.B. 417 - School Materials Amendments

Sponsor: Rep. Ken Ivory (R-West Jordan)

Position: We oppose H.B. 417

Status: Introduced in the House

Overview:

H.B. 417 would:

- Require school districts to select the least sexualized, violent, and vulgar content when reviewing and selecting instructional materials;
- Require school districts to inform parents of sensitive materials that students can access;
- Require school districts to inform parents when students check out sensitive materials;
- Prevents school boards from stopping people from displaying or reciting sensitive materials at public meetings if the material is available to students;
- Allows people to file lawsuits against school districts that provide student access to sensitive materials;
- Removes governmental immunity from school employees for violating restrictions on sensitive materials;
- Allows school employees to be charged with a Class A misdemeanor for violating restrictions on sensitive materials;

Background:

This bill is a continuation of Rep. Ivory’s campaign against what he calls pornography in Utah’s public schools. Already in the 2024 session, Rep. Ivory has introduced H.B. 29 (Sensitive Material Review Amendments) to make it easier for people to challenge and remove books from public school libraries. After librarians, the ACLU of Utah, and teacher unions spoke out against H.B. 29 at a [House Education Committee hearing](#) on January 23, 2024, Rep. Ivory released this bill which directly targets teachers and librarians with criminal prosecution for allowing sensitive materials to be in their classroom or library. In addition, this bill blocks school boards from preventing people from reading aloud sections of books at public meetings. Interestingly, lawmakers (including the committee chair) tried to block Rep. Ivory from reading a passage from a banned book at the January committee hearing. The vindictive nature of H.B. 417 is clear based on the elements he included in this bill.

Talking Points:

- By requiring instructional material to be the “least sexualized, violent, and vulgar,” this bill sets an impossible standard that will remove long-standing and effective books, lessons, and content from the curriculum.
- This bill creates a significant administrative burden on school districts to publish lists of all
- This bill puts librarians, teachers, and school board members in legal jeopardy for attempting to follow the complex book banning rules that Rep. Ivory has established.
- This bill inflames the war on teachers and librarians by exposing them to intimidation, harassment, and prosecution for doing their jobs.
- This bill requires teachers to inform parents of books and materials that their children are checking out of the library—eroding trust and privacy between teachers and students.