

Dear Chair Noble and Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Tim Vasconcellos, and I am a parent of public school students in Pembroke, NH. I am writing today to express my strong opposition to **Senate Bill 434**, known as the “Right to Challenge Act.”

As a parent, I hold the fundamental belief that I should have the right and the ability to determine what materials my own children have access to. However, SB 434 does not protect that right; instead, it empowers other parents to make educational decisions for *my* family.

My opposition to this bill is based on two primary concerns:

## **1. Protection of Parental Liberty for All Families**

While this bill is framed as a measure for parental rights, it effectively grants one household a “veto power” over the entire community. Under the current language of SB 434, a challenge can lead to the total removal or restriction of materials for all students, not just the child of the complainant.

I value my right to choose what is appropriate for my students. I do not want—nor do I authorize—another parent to determine what my children are allowed to read, see, or learn in a public school setting. By allowing one person's objection to dictate the curriculum for everyone, this bill infringes upon my own parental rights and those of the vast majority of families in our district.

## **2. Diversion of Critical School Resources**

Beyond the philosophical concerns, the administrative burden of SB 434 is deeply troubling. Our schools and SAU administrators are already stretched thin. This bill mandates a rigid and labor-intensive process for every single complaint, requiring written investigations, meetings, and formal school board hearings within strict timelines.

Every hour a superintendent or principal spends fielding these complaints is an hour they are **not** spending on:

- Improving student safety and school security.
- Supporting teachers in the classroom.
- Addressing the mental health and academic needs of our students.

Our tax dollars should be used to support children’s growth and success, not to fuel a bureaucratic machine that processes politically motivated challenges to textbooks and library materials.

## **Conclusion**

New Hampshire already has robust local policies for material reconsideration. SB 434 is an unnecessary state mandate that invites conflict and drains resources from our students. I urge you to protect the rights of **all** parents and the integrity of our school administrators by voting **Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL)** on SB 434.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to the children of New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

Tim Vasconcellos