

TO: Chairwoman Noble and members of the House Education Policy and Administration Committee

FROM: MacKenzie Nicholson, Co-Senior Director, MomsRising New Hampshire

DATE: April 8, 2026



Thank you Chairwoman Noble and members of the House Education Policy and Administration Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to SB 434. My name is MacKenzie Nicholson, and I am the Co-Senior Director of MomsRising New Hampshire, an on-the-ground and online grassroots organization representing thousands of moms and their families across the Granite State.

As amended, SB 434 would require every school district to adopt and publicly post a new, state mandated process for challenging school materials. It sets up a legal style complaint system that allows a parent to challenge a material and then requires the superintendent or their designee to decide whether that material should remain available, be restricted, be modified or be removed.

Here is why that matters. SB 434 is the most expansive censorship legislation in the country. It defines “material” very broadly, including not just books but also web content, videos, artwork and performances, even guest speakers. It borrows a “harmful to minors” standard from state law but then adds broad terms like “age inappropriate” and “otherwise offensive” without defining them. That makes it easy to target almost any book or lesson and it invites inconsistent decisions from district to district.

In other states, laws like this have not led to challenges against actual pornography. They have led to challenges against award winning, age appropriate books and materials that reflect different families and real life experiences. Similar laws have sparked major lawsuits in Idaho, Iowa, and Florida.

When a decision about a material has been made, the only clear appeal path is for the complainant to appeal to the school board. The bill does not require notice to other parents or the school community when a challenge is filed or when access changes, so many families may never know a book or material was restricted. They also do not get any opportunity to appeal that decision. If we are going to talk about parents’ rights, then all parents should have transparency and a meaningful chance to weigh in when decisions are made about materials bought with taxpayer dollars, not just the one person who files a complaint.

Parents, caregivers, and teachers across New Hampshire can agree that we want our kids to be strong readers, critical thinkers and prepared for the world ahead of them. We want them to have the freedom to learn an honest, age appropriate understanding of our history and the world so they can learn from our mistakes, solve problems and succeed.

This bill is unnecessary and takes us in the wrong direction. Districts already have policies that let parents raise concerns about materials and work out alternatives for their own children. That is local control working as it should. SB 434 creates a new state mandate that lets one parent start a potentially unlimited chain of complaints that can limit access for everyone else's kids.

We believe in parental choice. We also believe that my right as a parent to choose what my own child reads or has access to at school should not overrule what other families in my community choose for theirs.

This bill would also put new burdens on our schools and administrators. It concentrates decision making in one office by putting the call in the hands of the superintendent or a designee, with no clear guardrails around who that designee should be or what expertise they should have.

Our districts are already struggling to fill positions, meet each student's unique needs and keep the heat on. On top of those stressors, wide, sweeping policies like this stoke fear. Fear leads educators to second guess their expertise in what age appropriate materials work best for kids and then we see soft censorship. A lack of access to information because a book is never on the shelf or a material is never used is still censorship.

New Hampshire parents are not asking for this. A March 2025 Granite State Poll conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center found that 56 percent of voters believe decisions about books and materials should be made locally and only 33 percent think the state should set blanket policies from Concord.<sup>1</sup>

What we are asking for is adequate funding for our schools so our kids do not have geography in the library or reading help in the utility closet. Let our local teachers and parents make the decisions that are best for their students. We want our schools and educators to have more resources and support, not targets on their backs.

MomsRising members support transparency, parental involvement and safe, inclusive schools where kids can focus on learning. SB 434 does not advance those goals. It creates confusion, invites overreach and undermines trust in local educators who know their students best. **For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to find SB 434 inexpedient to legislate.**

Thank you,



MacKenzie Nicholson  
Co-Senior Director, MomsRising New Hampshire

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<sup>1</sup> EveryLibrary. (April 2025). New Hampshire Voters Reject HB324: A Call for Local Control, Not Criminalization. [https://www.everylibrary.org/nh\\_voters\\_reject\\_hb324\\_poll](https://www.everylibrary.org/nh_voters_reject_hb324_poll)

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