

PRESS RELEASE:

Indiana GOP Supermajority plays dirty politics with protections of children

Warsaw, IN (January 3, 2022)

Hoosiers across the state are becoming increasingly disappointed in how Indiana lawmakers continue to play dirty politics with their children. The latest political maneuver is no different.

Indiana state Senator Jim Tones, Evansville, followed through with his commitment to re-author legislation in 2022 to repeal Indiana's Obscenity Exemption. Sadly, in the 2021 legislative session, GOP leadership did NOT have the fortitude to protect children. In fact, those in opposition to safeguarding minors from pornography included the Indiana School Boards Association, Indiana Association of School Principals, Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents, Indiana State Teachers Association and the Indiana Library Federation.

Since the failure of the Indiana GOP to pass SB288 in the 2021 session, Purple for Parents Indiana has worked tirelessly educating Hoosiers across the state on the harmful material that is being distributed "legally" in their child's classrooms and libraries. Thousands of parents have risen up to take action and protect their children.

Unfortunately, in typical GOP election year political fashion, leadership made a political maneuver that stripped Senator Tones of his bill and inserted it into a weak and dangerous piece of legislation that not only puts the burden on hard working taxpaying parents, but leaves rogue teachers unbridled while creating an unnecessary layer of unelected bureaucracy.

Purple for Parents Indiana became aware of this political stunt last Thursday, the same day that Senator Scott Baldwin released a statement championing his weak and dangerous piece of legislation, SB167 which now includes SB17. It is our belief that in order to pass SB167, leadership needed the support of thousands of Hoosiers; thereby, relying on the anger of parents across the state who supported Senator Tones and SB17. Purple for Parents Indiana was told that leadership made the decision to incorporate SB17 prior to informing Senator Tones. Parents and Hoosiers across the state are being played like fools by the GOP leadership.

Purple for Parents Indiana has had a team of researchers dissecting SB167 and what Hoosiers are not being told is that this bill is a meager attempt during an election cycle at pacifying parents using the support of SB17. Senate Bill 167 sets up dangerous advisory committees which are selected and controlled by local school boards, many of which have displayed disdain and contempt for parents. We already know for a fact that these committees are instilling anti-American, anti-capitalist, microaggression, implicit bias, diversity, inclusion and equity with DEI/CRT tenets thru radical progressive social emotional learning. Radical progressive social emotional learning (RPSEL) is NOT eradicated in SB167. In fact, we've been told that RPSEL is here to stay and although SB167 does address surveys and racial components, it leaves RPSEL intact. Which means that things such as race essentialism, illustrated pornographic content and hypersexualized curriculum and content could still be used. We know children are being harmed by the very issues that SB167 purposefully ignores.

Also, these committees are responsible for deciding on the curriculum material and will make their recommendations to the Superintendent. They are required to make available to parents all curriculum material online; however, they have left a major loophole that allows rogue teachers to use material which they can post 5 days AFTER using. This isn't transparency. They also have been given the ability to recommend whether or not parents have the ability to opt in or opt out of certain material.

Additionally, unlike HB1040, SB167 puts the burden on hard working, taxpaying parents to follow a cumbersome complaint and appeals process which ends with the decision by the compromised Indiana Department of Education. Only then, can parents file a civil lawsuit provided they can find a lawyer willing to take on the teachers unions. Criteria on the application process for these committees isn't spelled out, sadly, and can be established under nefarious pretenses. Senator Baldwin, in an attempt to appease the teachers unions, has made very clear that there will be no consequences (fines or penalties) to rogue teachers who refuse to comply with state law. Whereas, HB1040 includes these.

We are asking our supporters to contact Senator Jeff Raatz and ask him to separate SB17 back out of SB167 and give it a fair hearing. This issue is too important to be jeopardized by combining it with SB167 and Hoosier parents deserve more from their elected officials than these types of political stunts. Additionally, these dangers we've listed above need to be addressed on SB167, the committees needs to be removed along with RPSEL. The Senate phone number is 800-382-9467