

# United Voices Opposing HB 1134

February 28, 2022

Dear Indiana General Assembly Senate Members:

Our organizations, which represent thousands of Hoosiers throughout Indiana, are collectively writing to ask that you oppose HB 1134. Despite amendments during the legislative process so far, HB 1134 represents unsound educational policy for the state of Indiana and should not be enacted into law. It will have serious unintended consequences and adverse impacts on learning environments throughout Indiana.

This bill chills educators' ability to teach students about our history; it will harm all students, particularly students of color, whose history and heritage would be subject to censorship; and it will make it more difficult for students to receive student support services in schools. In the aftermath of COVID, this bill is taking us in the wrong direction. Our state should be emphasizing inclusive and supportive learning environments that help all students succeed academically and prepare them for a globally competitive workforce. In a time when businesses are training their employees on diversity, equity and inclusion to help make them more competitive, HB 1134 takes us in the opposite direction.

This legislation retains divisive measures and perceptions that confuse and undermine the role of educational professionals throughout our state. HB 1134, and similar bills that have been introduced across our nation, have a deeply racist origin. We implore our legislators to understand that such a bill has no place in Indiana's present or future educational landscape.

This bill is bad educational policy and simply unnecessary. Over 90% of the teachers and other individuals who came to the Statehouse to testify during the Senate committee hearings were opposed to the bill. Those who were able to speak emphasized that there are already processes in place that enable parents to file grievances or express their concerns about issues related to classroom activities, curriculum materials, or book adoptions.

Despite amendments, many serious concerns remain with the legislation impacting the quality of our children's education:

**Students of Indiana deserve an accurate picture of historical and current events.** This bill infringes on students' rights to learn and reflect on their history and the implications for their world today. The ability of educators to teach should not be impacted by the fear of parent complaints that could escalate all the way to the Department of Education.

**Increasing teacher shortages exist in Indiana.** This bill *will* drive teachers from the workforce and diminish the state's ability to attract new teachers and retain quality teachers to the workforce, especially teachers of color.

**Students deserve educators and other support services personnel who help them become more resilient in a diverse, post-COVID world.** Daily, on-going and reoccurring consultation, collaboration, and intervention services are necessary to help students overcome

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trauma and learn coping skills to become more resilient. HB 1134 would interfere with the ability of school personnel to address student needs in the wake of the pandemic.

**Dual Credit programs in high schools will be in jeopardy.** Colleges and universities, because they have been absolved of the need to follow the bill's proscriptions, may generate materials for Dual Credit courses that would potentially conflict with the three divisive concepts outlined in HB 1134. Curriculum materials developed by an institute of higher education (IHE) could also be deemed inappropriate by the curriculum committee.

**The opt-in survey language in the bill will limit the number of youth participating in surveys.** Fewer responses will impact the robustness and may well affect the reliability of data that helps to understand student issues and drives services for our children and youth.

**Unfunded mandates by the state are not fiscally responsible.** The requirement for all districts to have a Learning Management System is an unfunded mandate. The lack of quality internet access in some areas of the state may make this impractical; and, furthermore, these decisions should be made at the local level.

Policymakers, educators and youth advocates have collaborated on a bipartisan basis in Indiana over the last two decades to reduce inequities in Indiana. Current Indiana data consistently document the presence of serious gaps in achievement and school discipline for Black and Brown children. Those data demonstrate how much work remains to be done in both understanding historical trends and addressing current inequities adversely impacting the educational opportunities of Black and Brown children. As difficult as it may be to face the truths about the horrors of our past or the disappointments of our present, we will never fully heal the divisions created by our history unless we are willing to confront and work through that past, as we teach our children to do the same. We should all continue striving for inclusive, supportive learning environments for all students to thrive.

We collectively urge you to oppose HB 1134.

Respectfully,

AAUW, Indiana  
AAUW, Indianapolis  
AAUW, Gary Merrillville Branch  
ACLU of Indiana  
AFL, CIO  
AFSCME Council 962  
AFT Local 519  
American Association of Teachers of  
German, Indiana Chapter  
American Federation of Teachers Indiana  
(AFT-IN)  
American Indian Center of Indiana  
Amethyst House

Ashley Thompson, Individual  
Bethel Cathedral AME Church  
Black Collegians, Inc.  
Bloom Project, Inc.  
BMWED/ Teamsters Rail Conference  
BMWED-IBT  
Boehringer Mannheim Corp.  
Bolling Law Office  
Butler University  
CANDLES Holocaust Museum  
Carmund White, Individual  
Cassandra Gray, Individual  
Castleton United Methodist Church

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Child Advocates, Inc.  
Children's Law Center of Indiana  
Children's Policy and Law Initiative of Indiana  
Central Indiana Realist Association  
City Consultants & Research LLC  
City of Columbus, Human Rights Commission  
Claude McNeal Productions  
Coalition of Labor Union Women  
College Democrats of Indiana  
College Mentors for Kids  
Community for Contemplation & Justice, St. Luke's United Methodist Church  
Communications Workers of America (CWA)  
Community Impact Team, ProAct Indy  
Concerned Clergy of Indianapolis  
Constance Dumas-Coleman, Individual  
Covering Kids and Families of Indiana  
Craig Leadership Services, LLC  
David Shriberg, University Professor  
Davyd Hall, Individual  
Deanna Nibarger, University Research Associate  
Delores Kenned, Real Estate Broker  
Delta Kappa Gamma  
Joselyn Whitticker, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., Indianapolis Alumnae Chapter  
Desmond Tutu Peace Lab, Butler University  
Diversity of Thought Project  
Dr. Alex Kor, son of Eva Kor  
Dr. Lisa Lambert Snodgrass, Assistant Professor  
Ebenezer Baptist Church  
Elkhart County NAACP  
Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission  
Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana, Inc.  
Fairway Home and Mortgage Corporation  
Freewheelin' Community Bikes  
Ft. Wayne NAACP  
Gary Common Council  
Gary NAACP  
GEKCO: Gender Expansive Kids & Co.  
GenderNexus

Global Learning Advisory Council  
GLSEN Central Indiana  
Good Shepherd United Methodist Women  
Grace and Mercy Assembly  
Greater Terre Haute NAACP Branch  
Hand Ponist, LLC  
Heat and Frost Insulators Local 18  
Heliene Houdek RN MSN, retired  
Hoosier Heartland Area Labor Federation, Northeast IN Chapter AFL-CIO  
Howard Tipton County Chapter AFL-CIO  
IBEW LU 481  
Indiana Association of Family and Consumer Sciences  
Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Indiana Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP-IN)  
Indiana Classical Conference  
Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Indiana Coalition for Human Services  
Indiana Coalition for Public Education, Monroe County  
Indiana Disability Rights  
Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association (IFLTA)  
Indiana Hands & Voices  
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community  
Indiana Language Roadmap Initiative  
Indiana Muslim Advocacy Network  
Indiana NAACP  
Indiana Professional Staff Organization  
Indiana PTA  
Indiana School Counselor Association  
Indiana School Mental Health Initiative  
Indiana School Nurse Association  
Indiana School Social Work Association  
Indiana State Teachers Association  
Indiana Statewide Independent Living Council (INSILC)  
Indiana United Methodist Church  
Indiana United Methodist Women  
Marcin D. Sterling, Associate Professor

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Ky Freeman, University Student Body  
President  
Center for Collaborative Systems Change  
Indiana Youth Services Association  
Indianapolis Alliance of Black School  
Education  
Indianapolis Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma  
Theta Sorority, Inc.  
Indianapolis MINISTERIUM  
Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource  
Center  
Indianapolis Public Schools  
Indianapolis Urban League  
International Alliance of Theatrical Stage  
Employees, Locals 30 and 893  
Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance Of  
Indianapolis  
IPS Community Coalition  
Jackie Simpson, Individual  
Jeffrey Gould, Distinguished Professor  
Jennifer Moore, Individual  
Joan Meek Membership Chairman, UMC  
Joe Clemons, Individual  
Katharyn Lentz, United Methodist Women  
Kathleen E. Hugo, Individual  
Kathleen King Thorius, Associate Professor  
Kathy Lentz, United Methodist Women  
Kevin Brown, Professor of Law  
Kevin L. Jones, Sr., Individual  
Knowledge Reigns Education Group  
L. Kay Kirby, MCCOY Board Member  
Laura B. Liu, Assistant Professor  
Laura Mojonnier, Individual  
League of Women Voters Brown County  
League of Women Voters Muncie, Delaware  
League of Women Voters of Indiana  
League of Women Voters, Bloomington,  
Monroe County  
Leah Richmond Jones, United Methodist  
Church  
LifeSmart Youth, Inc.  
Linda Barnes-Caldwell, School Nurse  
Link to Learn Behavior Therapy  
LuAnn Pelsor, United Methodist Church  
Marcia Baron, Professor  
Marian Gillett, United Methodist Women

Marion Community Schools  
Marion NAACP Branch #3059  
Martha Roath, United Methodist Women  
Mary Pearson, Ph.D Assistant Research  
Scientist, Center on Community Living and  
Careers Department  
MCCOY (Marion County Commission on  
Youth, Inc.)  
Michelle Greene, Individual  
Monroe County Democratic Party  
Monroe County NAACP  
Monroe County NOW  
NAACP, Greater Terre Haute Branch  
NAACP, MC Branch  
NAACP, Youth and College Division  
Nancy D. Goldfarb, Professor  
National Association of Social Workers,  
Indiana Chapter  
National Council of 100 Black Women,  
Indianapolis Chapter  
National Council of Negro Women,  
Indianapolis Section  
New Covenant Church, Indianapolis  
New Liberty Missionary Baptist Church  
Nilene Schurig, Individual  
Northern Indiana Area Labor Federation  
Northwest Indiana Federation of Labor  
North Central District United Methodist  
Women  
Oasis-2-Hops  
Omega Chapter, Indiana State Organization,  
DKG Society International  
One Heart Indiana  
Open Anthropology Institute  
PFLAG Fishers  
PFLAG Indianapolis  
ProAct Indy  
Becky Slayton, Individual  
Racial Equity Community Network  
Resilience Productions  
Robin Mouser, St. Lukes United Methodist  
Women  
Salt of the Earth Church  
Santamaría Graff, Individual  
Shawna Meyer Niederman, Individual  
SMART Local 20

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SMART,TD

Social Action Committee, St Luke's United Methodist Church, Indianapolis

Social and Emotional Learning Alliance for Indiana

Sophia Apgar, School Psychology Student  
South Bend NAACP

Southern Indiana Labor Federation

St Andrew United Methodist Women

St. Luke's United Methodist Church,  
Indianapolis

Stand for Children

Starfish Initiative

Suzanne Ayers, United Methodist Women

Teresa Sosa, Individual

The Body of Christ Harvest Church

Tom Burns, Individual

Trent Deckard, Pres. Pro-Tem, Monroe  
County Council

Twisted Sisters Book Club

UAW Region 2B

UFCW Local 700

United Methodist Women of Indiana

Crouse, Unit President and District  
Representative

United Methodist Women Central District

United Methodist Women, East District

United Methodist Women, Northeast  
District

United Methodist Women, North District

United Methodist Women, Southeast  
District

United Northeast Community Development  
Corporation

University Faculty for Racial Justice

Zeta Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi

Fraternity, Inc.