

Roberta DiMezza

From: Terry-Morgan, Elmo <elmo_terry-morgan@brown.edu>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 3:50 PM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: H7138: AGAINST

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To: The Distinguished Members of the State of Rhode Island
Legislature

From: Elmo Terry-Morgan, Associate Professor
Department of Africana Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre
Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies
Artistic Director, Rites and Reason Theatre
Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island

Re: H7138: Parents Bill of Rights

I write to you AGAINST the H7138 bill, which is under consideration by the Judiciary Committee of the Rhode Island Legislature. I write to you as a resident, tax-payer and voter in the State of Rhode Island, and not as representative of any other entity.

Passage of the H7138 Bill would establish Rhode Island as a state within the Union that is opposed to democracy and freedom of speech and expression, which is guaranteed by the First Amendment of our Constitution. Further, this bill would sanction fascist ideologies that are built upon the Theft of Knowledge from our state's children and future generations.

Critical Race Theory [CRT] is a very specific field of knowledge that studies the fact of systemic racism in our judicial system; and, which is primarily taught in law schools and college-level courses. Ignoring this reality contributes to a dystopic understanding of our country's history.

Further, this anti-CRT bill is basically designed to censor the teaching of selected histories, which is a slippery slope towards authoritarian Thought Control. Consider the burning of books in Nazi Germany that its government deemed to be Dangerous Thought.

Also, consider what other studies **would not** be allowed to be read and/or taught. Replace Race in CRT with CGT, Critical Gender Studies; Replace Race in CRT with CIS, Critical Indigenous Studies; Replace Race in CRT with CRR, Critical Religious Studies; Replace Race in CRT with CDS, Critical Democracy Studies. What is left to teach and learn; an erased history of our communities, state, nation and the world?

We are a nation built upon the free exchange of ideas, dialogue, debate, and analysis. One does not have to agree with the opposing thoughts of others, but our cultural heritage commands that we allow those various thoughts to be expressed in civil and peaceful ways, and not BANNED from our educational institutions and libraries. Our children and the larger community to which they belong are not so fragile that they cannot process information into knowledge and move forward in the world as fully expressive human beings.

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Elmo Terry-Morgan, Associate Professor
Department of Africana Studies
Department of Theatre Arts & Performance Studies
Artistic Director, Rites and Reason Theatre