

# New Hampshire Governor **MAGGIE HASSAN**

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## Press Release

### For Immediate Release

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Governor Hassan's Veto Message Regarding HB 332

CONCORD – Governor Maggie Hassan released the following message after vetoing HB 332:

“By the authority vested in me, pursuant to part II, Article 44 of the New Hampshire Constitution, on June 26, 2015, I have vetoed House Bill 332, relative to school district policy regarding objectionable course material.

“By imposing inflexible notice requirements on certain curricula, House Bill 332 would be an impediment to an adaptable learning environment, which is critical to helping our students develop the skills and critical thinking necessary for success in the 21st century economy. Furthermore, this bill would make it more difficult for young people to receive critical public health education and it could affect a wide range of curricula – including science and the study of important literature, ranging from Mark Twain to Shakespeare.

“Current New Hampshire law requires school districts to adopt a policy allowing an exception to specific course material based on a parent's or legal guardian's determination that the material is objectionable, and it also addresses parental objections to health and sex education based on religious beliefs, rendering this bill unnecessary. By requiring schools to provide no less than two weeks' notice to parents of all materials – literary books, textbooks, worksheets, videos, online resources – that even touch upon human sexuality or human sexual education, this bill imposes strict, over-burdensome notification requirements that could lead to schools avoiding material of merit and historical importance because it could potentially elicit objections and even litigation. In addition, these notification requirements could prohibit the natural, spontaneous discussions that arise in the context of everyday learning.

“Additionally and just as troublesome, this bill aims to put in place additional barriers for New Hampshire students who decide to access education about sexual health. Research has shown that teens who participate in comprehensive health education programs that discuss the importance of delaying sex and provide information about contraceptives are less likely to experience teen pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases.

“House Bill 332 would create an even greater stigma concerning sex education and lead to fewer students having access to important health information, which can have far-reaching, negative impacts on the health of our young people and communities.

“New Hampshire law already provides protections that allow parents to opt their children out from curricula that the parents consider to be objectionable. This unnecessary law would only serve to inhibit classroom discussions and access to important information about health education, while opening the door to notification policies that could lead to censorship. Therefore, I have vetoed House Bill 332.”