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March 18, 2024

Honorable Members of the Tennessee House Subcommittee on Children and Family Affairs
425 Rep. John Lewis Way North
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Members of the Tennessee House Subcommittee on Children and Family Affairs,

On behalf the 2.1 million members of AMAC – the Association of Mature American Citizens, including over 54,000 members residing in Tennessee, I write to urge your support of HB 2936 / SB 2749, which protects the fundamental right of Tennessee parents to raise and care for their children.

The family is the foundational building block of our society, and parents are defenders of the family. Loving parents should be free to direct the care and upbringing of their children in the manner they deem best for the child’s well-being. Unfortunately, government actors have hidden information from parents—even lied to them—or otherwise interfered with the sacred relationship parents have with their children. It is for parents—not the government—to decide how to raise their children and how to instill their family values.

We have all heard the horrifying stories of students being “transitioned” by employees at their local public schools without parental notification or consent. Amid all the confusion of being an adolescent in the 21st century, our children need the love and support of their parents. They need their parents to be able to make decisions about their education and health care without undue interference from the government.

This is what makes HB 2936 / SB 2749 necessary. Tennessee has long been a leader in safeguarding the freedom of its citizens. But unfortunately, the state lags far behind many other states in providing strong protections for families as they seek to raise their children as they best see fit. For instance, it is currently unclear what a parent’s rights and remedies are when a school official or other government employee unduly interferes with the parent-child relationship. These bills fix that problem with clear language that fully protects the authority of parents to guide their child’s religious upbringing, education, and medical decisions. Similar legislation has been passed into law in 17 other states, and it has provided tried-and-true safeguards for parental decision-making in those states.

The time is now for Tennessee to pass a law that prioritizes the rights of parents, because that’s how we ensure that families succeed.

We thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this bill, and welcome further conversation on this crucial issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Carlstrom".

Bob Carlstrom
President
AMAC Action