

H.B. 334 - Health Education Amendments**Sponsor: Rep. Carol Spackman Moss (D- Cottonwood Heights)****Position:** We support HB 334.**Overview:**

HB 334 would:

- Require the State Board of Education to establish curriculum requirements that include instruction in sexual assault resource strategies and sexual violence behavior prevention.
- Require the board to develop curriculum requirements to explain the legal implications of electronically distributing sexually explicit images.
- Requires students to receive “age-appropriate” instruction on these topics for at least two occasions between grades 7 and 12.
- Amend provisions related to when a student receives health education instruction.
- Requires a local education agency (i.e., school district) to review county-level data on sexual assaults to inform policies on health education.

Background:

- This is Rep. Moss’s third attempt to pass a similar bill. In 2021, this bill failed to advance from its first committee hearing until Rep. Moss removed a section on education in “consent” from the text. It later failed on the House floor in a 31-39 vote. In 2022, a similar bill (HB 274) passed through the Utah House on a 43-25 vote, but failed 10-18 in the Senate after multiple senators switched their votes.
- In 2022, the similar HB 274 received the backing of the League of Women Voters, Utah PTA, Prevent Child Abuse Utah, UEA, Utah State Superintendents Association, and the Utah State School Boards Association.

Talking Points:

- Rep. Moss explained the purpose of her bill is to ensure that Utah students are informed about sexual abuse, grooming, and sexual violence. “I know what teens want and that is knowledge, information,” she told ABC4 in 2022. “The purpose of the bill is to teach kids that these things happen, not to make it happen, it’s to make them understand.”
- According to the Utah Department of Health, 1 in 3 women in Utah will experience sexual violence in their lifetime, 1 in 6 women in Utah will experience rape or attempted rape in their lifetime, and 1 in 25 men in Utah will experience rape or attempted rape in their lifetime.
- According to 2020 statewide polling, 65% of Utahns support medically-accurate sex education curriculum in Utah schools, with 51% favoring “Comprehensive sex education” and 14% favoring “Preventative sex education”. Support for medically accurate sex education is driven by Utah’s unaffiliated and Democratic voters (75% and 93%, respectively), with 43% of Republicans in support.
- An overwhelming majority of Utahns believe it is important to cover a wide variety of topics in sex education curriculum. Including sexually transmitted diseases/infections (96%), HIV/AIDS (95%), healthy relationships (95%), consent (91%) and birth control (91%)