

Greetings to the members of the Senate Education Committee,

Chair Brian Campion and Senators Martine Larocque Gulick, Nader Hashim, David Weeks, and Terry Williams:

I am writing today in regard to S.87, the Holocaust Education Bill. While I support educating Vermont's students about the Jewish Holocaust I feel it is equally important to educate our youth about all of the other genocides that have happened and are currently happening as I write this message to you.

We must educate our children about the injustices that have been perpetrated not just in Europe but on every continent on the planet. We must do this so that our future leaders have context for the current geo-political situation and also so that they may see that all people are capable of being victim or perpetrator to genocide.

Genocide is a big subject and once one dives into it one sees that 6 hours is not nearly enough time to cover all of the political nuances and atrocities, let alone the conditions of social, media and government control over the populations who seemingly stood by, apathetic to the the atrocities being committed. Even worse is the complicity and acceptance of the devastation and annihilation of people based on race, faith, perceived mental capabilities (such as in Vermont's dark history of eugenics) or simply because they live on a land that another people desire.

I am asking you to reconsider S.87 in this context. Massachusetts has developed a more inclusive Genocide Education bill that I urge you to look toward as you develop education standards for Vermont's future leaders.

Respectfully,

Jess Bernier  
Barre, VT