



The Kid Angle

Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children

H.R. 5 is a Politicians' Bill of Rights

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Today, the House plans to vote on H.R. 5, a bill that does the exact opposite of what its title claims. Sponsors and proponents offer the bill as a way to empower parents in the lives and education of their children. This is a noble goal.

Parents are fundamental to the upbringing of children, as [First Focus on Children President Bruce Lesley recently wrote to Congress](#), and absolutely must be engaged in their education. In fact, children have better outcomes when their parents are involved. **That's why Congress must listen to what parents and their children say they want — and then give it to them.**

Here is what parents and children say they want:

- **Greater investment in public education.** Lake Research Partners found in a recent poll that American [voters believe the country spends too little on public education](#) by 60%-14% — a 4-to-1 margin.
- **Safety from gun violence in schools.** In a recent poll, [51% of parents](#) across party lines ranked keeping children safe from gun violence in schools as their No. 1 priority — nine points higher than the second-place priority.
- **Curricula that teach children the things they need to know** to be successful in school and life. In fact, [51% of poll respondents across party lines](#) said they worry children are not learning what they need to be successful — 15 points higher than the next biggest concern.
- Solutions to problems including [teacher shortages, inadequate funding, and pandemic learning loss](#)
- Protection of [children's mental health](#) and provision of mental health treatment
- Access to [health insurance and affordable health care](#) for all children
- Revival of the [expanded tax break for most families with children](#). More than 80% of parents across party lines said they support bringing back the expanded child tax credit.
- Creation of [more effective child care](#) options
- Expansion of [family and medical leave](#)
- Expansion of [universal pre-school](#) for all 3- and 4-year-olds

Here is what H.R. 5 and related agendas offer:

- **New reporting requirements** that would move funds from teaching to bookkeeping, such as the requirement that every elementary and secondary school in the country provide a detailed accounting of costs, some of which are shared across school campuses, for the nation’s more than 90,000 public schools
- **Unfunded mandates** that require every school in every corner of the country to provide parents a list of books and other reading materials available in the school library
- **Bans on or removal of books** that are part of the established literary canon, such as [The Bluest Eye](#), [Beloved](#), [The Kite Runner](#) and [The Handmaid’s Tale](#) or raise questions about American society, such as [“How to be an Antiracist”](#) and dozens more
- **Prohibitions on teaching subjects such as slavery**, the Trail of Tears, the Holocaust, and important figures like Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Anne Frank
- **Bans on high school classes** such as AP African-American history, a ban [opposed by 7-in-10 Americans](#)
- **Restricted access to health care for children**, and in particular to mental health services

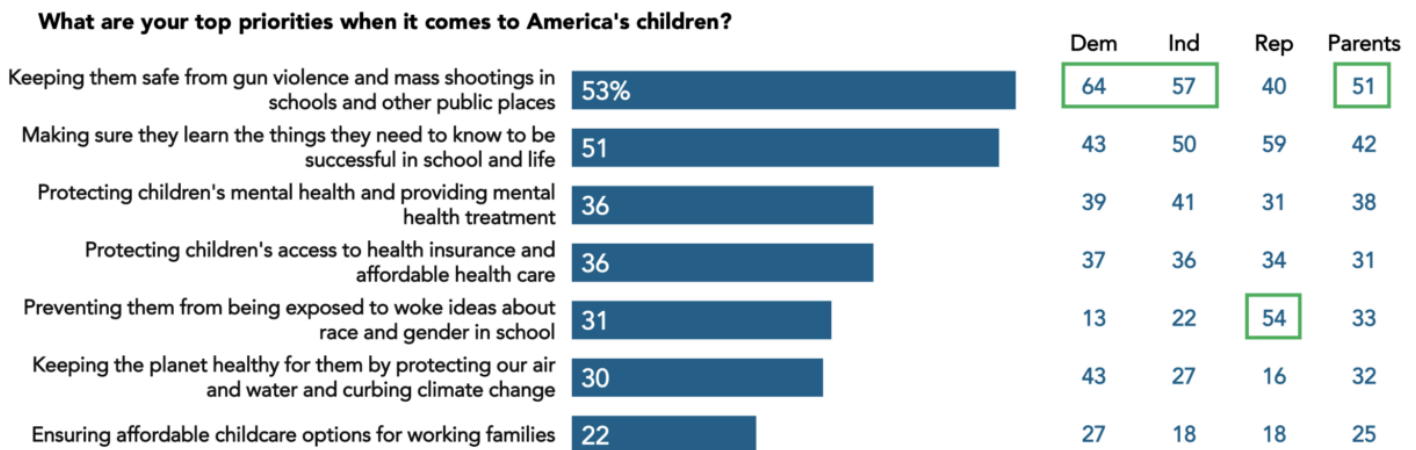
To put it bluntly, H.R. 5 gets a big fat “F” when it comes to delivering what parents have said their children want and need in schools and life.

(For analysis of how H.R. 5 and proposed amendments will affect children, check out our [Vote Scorecard](#).)

This extremist bill is unlikely to become law – at least in the current Congress. But the principles it outlines set a dangerous precedent of government control over local schools.

H.R.5 is a **Politicians’ Bill of Rights** that will usurp the authority of parents and children in the schools that they attend and support with their tax dollars. Parents, voters and children want solutions that respect their fundamental rights and their desire to work alongside educators, school support staff, and school leaders to raise and nurture the next generation of citizens.

This is what parents want and children need.



Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted February 23-February 27, 2023. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.



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