

CRT

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you about questions I have received on Critical Race Theory (CRT). I do NOT support the teaching of CRT. However, the bill that was before the Legislature, [HB0097](#) - Ban on teaching and training critical race theory, was not a good bill, and I voted against its introduction. HB97 would have made teachers civilly liable for poorly defined actions. It stated that a teacher could not provide instruction that presents any form of blame or judgement on the basis of national origin. I am not certain that a teacher can talk about the Holocaust without assigning blame to the Nazis or Germany. I am not sure we would have any teachers left in our K12 system if they do not have civil immunity like all government workers. A governmental entity is usually only civilly liable for damages resulting from bodily injury, wrongful death or property damage.

The primary reason I did not support introduction of HB97 was because the Wyoming Constitution places curriculum under the authority of locally elected school boards. **Article 7, Section 11 Textbooks** states, “Neither the legislature nor the superintendent of public instruction shall have power to prescribe text books to be used in the public schools.” This has always meant that locally elected school boards – not the Legislature – have authority over curriculum. A basic tenet of my Republican values is that the most effective, responsible and responsive government is government closest to the people.

When my father’s parents came to Wyoming in the early 1900s, they were both teachers. My grandmother continued to teach in the Green River Valley after my grandfather died in 1928, and later she was elected County Superintendent of Schools. I have a long history of educators in my family tree. I have been heavily involved in education issues in the Legislature, and I am an ardent supporter of public education. I have talked to both Sublette school districts and can assure you they do NOT teach critical race theory. Both districts have their curriculum on the districts’ websites, and are working to make them easier to find. I have spoken with the executive director of the Wyoming School Boards Association, and he stated, “The Wyoming state standards for social studies and civics should be available from the Wyoming Department of Education. They do not contain any CRT elements in them. The curriculum map for social

studies should be available from the local school district. No district's curriculum in Wyoming contains CRT to my knowledge. This is not a Wyoming problem."

I do not like the state taking more control from locally elected school boards, and I have fought that on many fronts in the Legislature. I don't vote for bad bills or ones that strip authority from locally elected people. I have never voted for a bill that required anything other than the Constitution to be taught. I can be reached at albert@albertsommers.com with questions or comments.