

# Frank Baker 2025 House Testimony on Media Literacy Bill

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SUBCOMMITTEE

Good morning.

'we will lose our democracy' without media literacy- Without media literacy, Americans will be hopelessly vulnerable to misinformation and manipulation...NOT my words, but those of Supreme Court justice Sotomayor

Good morning. My name is Frank Baker. I am a media literacy ed consultant and in the past I have helped the state dept of education write teaching standards that included media literacy.

The good news today is that the school librarian is the ONE person in most every school that is stepping up to meet the challenge of providing instruction for students who are NOT media literate.

Some of you have been misled about the goal of media literacy: it is NOT to teach students WHAT to think but rather HOW to think. At its core media literacy is critical thinking, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED IN THE PROFILE OF THE GRADUATE—a skill that is severely lacking in SC schools.

Past evidence (from evaluating SC Ready test results) indicate our students are NOT READY. Most MS & HS needed more instruction because they failed that part of the test in identifying BIAS and judging the credibility of information.

Here are some FACTS in case you're interested in FACTS:  
Propaganda does not exist in the teaching standards of our

state.

It has been removed so it is not tested.

Techniques of Persuasion is not in the standards, so our students won't learn the methods influencers, advertisers and politicians employ to fool or mislead.

So, what I previously helped put INTO the standards is GONE.

The state dept of education will probably testify that we ARE teaching media literacy. Ask them for evidence. The one ELECTIVE course that DoE may cite –a digital literacy course.. was taken by just 20% of those who were eligible.

In a recent survey, an overwhelming majority of teens (94%) reported they want their schools to teach media literacy, but only 39% reported having had any such instruction during the 2023-24 school year.

I am a dreamer: I dream of the day that every teacher in our state will be trained to help students be better critical thinkers and viewers.

I dream of a day that this committee will see the value in passing this bill onto the House for debate and the Senate.

Is today the day?

Will you help or will we continue to leave students behind?