

HCS HB 441 -- CRONKITE NEW VOICES ACT (Corlew)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education

This bill establishes the "Cronkite New Voices Act" and defines "school sponsored media," "student journalist," and "student media advisor."

The act provides that a student journalist has a right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in school-sponsored media.

These provisions do not apply to content that is libelous or slanderous; constitutes an invasion of privacy; violates federal or state law; is a threat of violence; advertises a product or service that is illegal or is not permitted to be sold to minors by law; is likely to incite students to commit an unlawful act or to violate school district policy or procedure; or is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

This bill does not prevent the teaching of professional standards of English and journalism to student journalists by a student media advisor.

The bill requires each school district to adopt a written student freedom of expression policy which must include reasonable provisions for the time, place, and manner of student expression. The policy may include restrictions on speech that may be defined as vulgar, obscene, offensively lewd, profane, harassing, threatening, or intimidating.

The above provisions apply to public institutions of higher education as well as school districts, as specified in the bill.

This bill is similar to HB 2058 (2016).