

Senate sends critical race theory bill to Evers' desk

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The state Senate today signed off on legislation that backers say would ban the teaching of critical race theory in Wisconsin K-12 schools, clearing the way for the bill to head to Gov. Tony Evers.

The bill, which cleared the chamber 20-13, next heads to Gov. Tony Evers, who's expected to veto the legislation.

Sen. Howard Marklein, R-Spring Green, was the only Republican who joined Dems in voting against the bill. He didn't speak during the debate.

But he said in a statement from his office, "I am opposed to CRT, but our local school boards are in the best position to oppose CRT and monitor their curricula to make sure CRT isn't taught in my districts. This is a local control issue."

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AB 411 would prohibit K-12 schools and independent charter schools from teaching race or sex stereotyping. It also would ban teaching one race or sex is inherently superior; that someone by the virtue of their race or sex is inherently racist, sexist or oppressive; that someone's moral character is determined by their race or sex; and that someone should feel guilt, anguish or other form of distress because of their race or sex.

Sen. Andre Jacque, R-DePere, pointed to Martin Luther King's speech in which he talked about his dream that one day children would be judged by the content of their character, not the color of their skin.

Jacque argued it was inherently racist and sexist to say anyone is racist or sexist simply because of the color of their skin or their gender.

Sen. Lena Taylor, D-Milwaukee, countered Blacks face a different standard than whites in the criminal justice system and “driving while Black” is real.

She recounted her son being detained by police while he was trying to deliver a turkey to a neighbor. Taylor said he was mistaken for someone else and had done nothing wrong, “his content thrown to the ground.”

“It hurts me to know my son wasn’t seen by the content of his character but by the color of his skin,” she said.

In an addendum to his committee testimony, co-author Rep. Chuck Wichgers, R-Muskego, submitted a list of additional terms and concepts he argued would violate the language in the bill. That list includes: anti-racism, cultural awareness, diversity training, multiculturalism, racial healing and social justice.

See Wichgers’ addendum to his [testimony](#).