I am living in Utah. I recently heard of a sex-ed. bill that was vetoed, so I decided to take a look and write my own thoughts about it.

This is what I understand: The bill in question is HB 363. It was created to keep schools from teaching about contraceptives for preventing pregnancy and STDs, or any aspect of human sexuality besides abstinence. If you live in Utah, too, then you probably already know this; it was on the news.

It was also on the news that Governor Gary Herbert vetoed the bill after being expected to sign it into law. It’s not surprising that he was expected to, since Utah is a republican state and our governor is republican himself.

I think he was remarkably brave for vetoing it, and I think it was right to, considering what the bill tried to do.

Many parents rely on the schools’ sex-ed. programs to explain things and let the teachers answer the questions. They also explain the risk of STDs and pregnancy, and how to make sure your body is healthy, not something every parent knows or knows how to explain. For example, in my health class the teacher handed out papers to us girls explaining how to do a self-breast check, and gave the guys a separate paper.

I know people think that it should be left up to the parents to explain things, but as I said before, not everyone knows how to explain stuff. And besides, there’s permission slips for a reason; if you don’t want your kid to listen to that unit, then don’t sign the permission slip and they’re sent to the library to work on other stuff to make up the credit. No harm done.

Now, with all that said, I still think it’s important to teach abstinence. Kids have to understand that you can’t rely on birth control pills and condoms to keep them safe. The only 100% tried-and-true way of preventing pregnancy and STDs is by abstaining from sex, except for HIV, because you can get that through dirty needles. But those details on exactly what will happen to you if you don’t have safe sex is why fewer kids are having sex.

So I think it was right to veto HB 363. If you think the decision was bad, don’t sign the permission slip. But leave the rest of us the choice, so we can decide for ourselves, okay?