

Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Ray Bennett and I encourage you to oppose HB 5307. The very title of this bill presupposes that it is unreasonable to not send a child to school until the age of seven. The assumption is that by keeping a child home for another year, they will somehow be disadvantaged in their learning. Dr. Raymond Moore was a teacher and administrator, a superintendent of a school system, and he held responsible positions at the federal level in relation to policy formation and implementation. He stated: "What the child needs most to grow well is a warm one-to-one relationship with a parent (or parent figure) who is always there to comfort and guide him. During the first crucial eight years, home should be the child's only nest and parents the teachers of their children." This bill takes away the right and hampers the responsibility of parents to determine what is best for their child. Parents don't need the government to tell them how to love their children. "Natural bonds of affection," the Supreme Court once wrote, "lead parents to act in the best interests of their children." These days Republicans and Democrats agree on very few issues. But loving parents choosing how to raise their children is an issue that repeatedly receives overwhelming support. A poll conducted by Zogby in 2010 revealed that Americans across the political spectrum agree with traditional parental rights. When presented with the statement that, "In general, parents have the constitutional right to make decisions for their children without government interference unless there is proof of abuse or neglect," 90.8% of Independents, 92.4% of Democrats, and 97.5% of Republicans all agreed. This kind of like-minded support must be taken seriously. The government should not force parents to do something they do not believe is best for their child. It is the parent's responsibility to make decisions for their child, not the government's responsibility. This bill is a solution in search of a problem. I encourage you to oppose HB 5307.