

Dear Representatives,

It has come to my attention today that you are considering a bill, H.B. 5307, that would infringe upon parental rights by forcing them to place their children in school at the age of 6 instead of allowing them to wait until the age of 7. The current law, as it is, has been working well for years, so what is the compelling government interest to infringe upon parental rights?

According to a study, titled “The Gift of Time? School Starting Age and Mental Health” published by the National Bureau of Economic Research in October 2015:

*“We found that **delaying kindergarten for one year reduced inattention and hyperactivity by 73 percent** for an average child at age 11 and it virtually eliminated the probability that an average child at that age would have an ‘abnormal,’ or higher-than-normal rating for the inattentive-hyperactive behavioral measure.”*

Two organizations that advocate for early childhood education — Defending the Early Years and Alliance for Childhood — issued the report titled “Reading in Kindergarten: Little to Gain and Much to Lose.” It says there is no evidence to support a widespread belief in the United States that children must read in prekindergarten or kindergarten to become strong readers and achieve academic success.

*“When children have **educational experiences that are not geared to their developmental level or in tune with their learning needs and cultures, it can cause them great harm, including feelings of inadequacy, anxiety and confusion.**”*

When it comes to children, parents are in the best position to decide what is in the best interest of their own children, not the school system or the state bureaucracy. This most recent attempt to usurp parental rights and prerogatives marks the third attempt in as many years. Therefore, I urge you to reject H.B. 5307 and stand firm against the efforts of a minority opinion to infringe upon parental rights.

Sincerely,

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