

Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Julianna Bennett and I am here in opposition to Section 17 and 18 of SB 874.

Section 18 would make homeschooling families eligible to receive “model curricula and frameworks” approved by the Department of Education. This is not even remotely necessary, as homeschoolers already have an overwhelming abundance of curricula to choose from. I am also concerned that the reference to homeschools in a statute referring to state-approved curriculum standards could muddy the important distinction between state-approved schools and parent-directed homeschools.

Section 17, which would require homeschooling parents to personally sign a registration form at their local school district office, will place needless burdens on both busy families as well as school officials. Neither need more work.

I’m a homeschool graduate, so I know how busy a homeschooling family can be. My parents homeschooled nine children, which meant teaching highschoolers, middle schoolers, first graders and kindergartners all at the same time. Believe me, the last thing a homeschool mom needs is a mandate from the government!

My parents began homeschooling my oldest brother in the mid 1980s, and two years ago finished thirty plus years of home education with the graduation of my youngest brother. Over those thirty years, they have seen multiple attempts by the government to regulate homeschoolers. I remember when I was nine, our family spent a very long day here at the Capitol, so my parents could testify against regulations on homeschooling. My parents, and hundreds of other parents like them, sacrificed and dedicated themselves for their children, and now I have to speak up on behalf of the next generation of homeschooling parents.

Children do not belong to the public school, to then grant parents the privilege of educating their own children. No, children belong to their parents, who choose whether to entrust their children’s education to a public school, or a private school, or whether they will shoulder that responsibility themselves. My parents educated their children magnificently despite attempts at government regulation, and completely without government assistance. The current generation of homeschooling parents can do just as well, and you can help keep life so much easier for them by opposing both Section 17 and 18 of SB 874. Thank you.