

Dear State Representative/Senator:

I am writing in opposition to Sections 17 and 18 of Governor's Bill #874, which pertains to home education. The primary reasons for my communication are the disregard for individual children's needs and discrimination against home education.

I am opposed to Section 17 of the Governor's bill because I feel that forcing home educators to register is a violation of our children's rights, as well as parental rights, as citizens of the United States of America. This bill not only ensures that homeschooled children are categorized as "abnormal", it also guarantees discrimination against them. Most government officials appear to have the misconception that homeschooled children go 'under the radar' and somehow 'miss out' in society. Most homeschooled children are, however, the most engaged children in the world due to their tailored education and their parents' desires to preserve their child's innocence in learning about the world and nature.

I oppose the notion that I can enroll my child into public school from the comfort of my home and yet to homeschool I have to go to a government office. Not only does this allow discrimination and profiling of my children and myself by a government official, it also ensures that we are labeled as "special". This act undermines the freedoms of being a citizen of the United States. I understand the concern behind the bill is the misconception that a single appearance can inform a 'government official' of parental misconduct and alert authorities to child abuse; however, how many parental neglect cases involve a parent asking to spend MORE time with their children? I am trying prepare my children for a career, as well as the bullying and materialism, that has become norm in our society. I, as a parent, get more lenience/understanding from our society by sending my children to strangers at daycare/camp/public school than taking on the responsibility of teaching them scholarly subjects. This is catastrophic as a society and disheartening as a parent. Moreover, the government solution to "send someone out to investigate" a situation only teaches a child to hide their feelings and show no emotion to circumvent leaving the ones they know and love.

In regard to Section 17 of the Governor's bill #874's ability to protect children by moderating home education, I can provide over 100,000 studies showing that soiled, physically and mentally abused children attend public school daily. Public education will not solve the problem at hand. Moreover, home educated children do remarkably well compared to their public school peers (references provided upon inquiry), which is in direct opposition to the notion that keeping a public record of every child = keeping children safe. Our public

education setting is removing the innocence and child from the education environment by significantly limiting play, imagination, laughing, running and screaming from their normal activities. Why am I to believe that this is protecting our children?

I oppose Section 18 of Governor's bill #184 suggesting "curriculum" because I, as a parent, know my children's learning capabilities and their interests. It is my goal to incorporate learning in parallel with life. A "blue-print curriculum" will interfere with this. Every child has his/her own interests that lead to an education most effectively developed by a person directly involved with the child (making it not only age-specific, but also interest specific). I, as a homeschooling mother, strive to make my children's education as tailored to their needs as I can. It is my desire to teach them that learning can be fun and is essential to our existence as a human race on planet earth. I do not want learning to be a chore; I want my children to love it. Moreover, their home is their most comfortable environment to learn in.

I full heartedly believe that my children learn the best without outside interference; I tailor our learning adventures to what sparks THEIR interest. I firmly believe that as parents, our job is to ensure that our children can survive AND thrive on their own in our society. My husband and I live our lives to ensure our children learn to cope and live in our society, while constantly being under financial hardship because of this choice. I make this statement, herein, because homeschooling is not an 'easy' choice for our family. We make daily sacrifices to instill values and a love of learning that we hope ensures our children will survive, and hopefully, thrive in their world. I am opposed to the new legislation because it will interfere with the learning, values, and overall well-being of my children as I see fit. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

Star Ems

Home Educator

February 28, 2019