

Testimony in opposition to H8531

While I understand and support the importance of ensuring children receive a quality education, this bill uses vague language and I fear it will lead to inconsistent judgment and do more harm than good. The current Rhode Island homeschool law is working and should remain the way it is.

This bill may unintentionally punish families who seek homeschooling for legitimate reasons, including bullying, medical issues, disability-related needs, and mental health concerns. Families facing these challenges should not be forced into prolonged approval battles or left uncertain about their ability to homeschool their children.

As a parent of two children, ages 8 and 10, I have seen firsthand the positive impact that homeschooling and our educational community have had on their lives. They have formed lasting friendships, built strong social connections and developed meaningful relationships in an environment where they feel safe, supported, and encouraged to grow. I cannot imagine forcing a change that could disrupt the stability, learning environment, and friendships they have worked so hard to build.

Parents are primarily responsible for the care and education of their children. Any legislation that expands government authority over homeschooling should be narrowly tailored, objective, and respectful of parental rights. H8531 does not strike that balance.

My family chose to homeschool for a variety of reasons. Our older children attend public school and it has always left something to be desired. Our younger two children are able to get the help they need custom lesson plans, participate in so many amazing opportunities. My children attend field trips weekly, have a variety of social meet ups, they participate in book clubs, state and international fairs, science clubs and many more unique events.

We are a democratic family, we voted for the current lawmakers, please make sure my vote counts and my voice along with so many other homeschool voices are heard. If this law passes I would be considering moving out of RI and taking my tax dollars with me. This law may not mean a lot to most but to my family, my community this is life.

Thank you

Adam Bentley

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