

Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Aleksandra Madej, and I am submitting written testimony in opposition to H8531. I write to you as a homeschooling mother of two thriving, well adjusted, and well educated children. Our homeschooling journey began at the onset of the covid pandemic. Our oldest child was in pre-K that March, and would have been due to start Kindergarten that September. We felt that the environment in the school system at the time would have been a traumatic start to his schooling years, so we kept him home. We are now in our sixth year of homeschooling and haven't looked back.

Homeschooling provides a multitude of benefits to students. It allows parents to provide individualized attention to each child based on their learning style, needs, strengths, and areas that need improvement. There are many reasons that families chose to pull their children from the school system. Many children simply do not thrive in the school environment for a variety of reasons. Parents should have the right to pull their children out of school if it is not in their best interest to remain there. Colleges love to recruit homeschooled students because of their creative thinking and problem solving, strong work ethic, and their love of learning. This is a testament to the fact that homeschooling produces successful citizens.

Any bill that seeks to encroach on a parent's right to determine how best to educate their child is unacceptable. Parents know their children better than anyone else, therefore the decision regarding their children's education should remain with them. The proposed legislation has language that is incredibly vague regarding what would deem a family "unfit" to homeschool. In addition, this bill does not allow for parents to appeal the ruling of the state's decision regarding their ability to homeschool. This is deeply concerning, unconstitutional, and violates basic parental rights.

It is for these reasons that I strongly oppose H8531 and respectfully urge the committee to oppose as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Aleksandra Madej