

Testimony in opposition to H8531

My name is Alicia Bentley and I live in Coventry RI. I am an avid member of EnrichRI, Rhode Island's largest secular homeschooling organization and I oppose H8531.

I chose to homeschool my kids for a lot of reasons, the biggest being I loved spending time with them and seeing them grow into amazing humans. The new legislation is way too vague and will lead to inconsistent decisions. If my children are forced into the public school system they would be lost, they would be nothing more than a test score to the district.

I have two older children in public schools and it has been less than desirable. They are older and have chosen to remain in public schools till they graduate this year. Being on both ends of the spectrum I love the control homeschool allows me. We follow a strict curriculum as required by the state and we have to meet the minimum standards as far as subjects and school days go. We however can guide our children and allow them to thrive in the best environment for each of them.

We are part of an amazing coop, my children interact with at least 15 other adults weekly who have a hand in teaching and leading my children towards growth. These are not people just doing a job. These are amazing individuals who are deeply invested not only in their children but in mine. We are part of such an amazing community, I can't imagine what life would look like otherwise.

My kids have made a ton of friends, they are part of coops, they have both girl scout and scout troops, they do many activities weekly with a big array of students. They have found life long meaningful friendships. The advocacy team for EnrichRI is amazing, they go to the meetings they listen they care, they are pushing for this bill not to pass. I beg of you to listen to them. Listen to what the families want.

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

Alicia Bentley

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