

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Lesly Goudy. I am a homeschool mom of 6 amazing children; 2 daughters and 4 sons. My husband and I have been homeschooling in Minnesota since 2012. We have chosen this alternative and have very much appreciated the freedom to educate in our home and address each of our children's needs individually. Each of our children learns differently style-wise. We also have children that have needed assistance through private therapies for disabilities in learning. I am so grateful that we have had the opportunity to teach each child in the best way for each of them as individuals!

Today, I am writing you to let you know that I am opposed to the proposed Minnesota amendment, HF874.

1. The effort to improve our state's education does not need an amendment. Provisions have already been made for an education system in the Minnesota Constitution. The language that is used in the proposed amendment is very obscure and misleading and implies that the only educational option is public school.
 - "Fundament Right"- the proposed amendment is used 2 times and implies that this is a fact- there is no mention of this in Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution nor in the Minnesota Constitution. The use of this term in this proposed amendment is not the correct interpretation of "fundamental right" and implies that children receiving an alternative school education- ie- private or homeschool, are being denied a "fundamental right".
 - "Quality"- This is used 2 times. How will "quality" be defined and who is going to define this? Shouldn't it be the loving parents/guardians of their children, who know them best and have more of an interest in their children's lives compared to the state government, that knows very little information of them as a whole individuals that makes the education decisions for each child? Each child is completely different and has different educational needs and therefore many options to educate our children is the best, most logical option for the people of Minnesota.
 - What does "fully prepare" mean? Children learn differently and have different capacities to learn. The proposed amendment seems to imply that the state is the only one that can educate and bring a child to their full potential- this is totally misleading and can lead to disappointment on the part of the child. Again, how can the state do this when they do not know the child intimately? It is simply not possible for the state to make these decisions for each child.
 - "Democracy"- Per our US Constitution-we are a republican form of government- not a democracy.

- “Uniform achievement standards”- this can only test academic achievement. This does not measure the whole person- it does not give you a full picture of a person’s life- their health physically and emotionally, their character and how they will function throughout their lives. A person is far more than something that just spits out information like a computer or a robot. Children are far more than that.

2. It is not necessary to change our current state constitution and is dangerous.

-The proposed amendment takes the responsibility for the education of each child away from the parents/guardians and from the legislatures to ensure that an efficient system of public schools exists (which already does exist).

-The state would take control of education away from – rather than empowering parents, who know their children’s needs, and local schools to educate according to the needs of the child rather than the state making blind decisions for all children. Why not put into writing something that will empower parents in our state and preserve their rights to make the best educational decisions for their children? Reserve the right for the parents to choose public school or alternatives in education such as private, religious or homeschools.

-All current laws in favor our educational choices as parents could be in jeopardy if called into question because all current laws are subject to review against any changes to the Minnesota Constitution. The new proposed amendment implies public schools are the only plausible choice in education- nothing else!

The proposed amendment will be fraught with lawsuits and as a result will be financially and emotionally devastating to the people of Minnesota. Our court systems are already overloaded- why would we unnecessarily add to the overload? We must preserve educational choices for children and continue to place the responsibility of educational choices with the parents/guardians of Minnesota children who know their children best! The amendment is first off not necessary, secondly is taking rights away for self-rule. There needs to be more educational options than a public school education in order for parents to best see fit to educate their children.

Thank you for reading this. Thank you for your service to represent us!

Sincerely,

Lesly Goudy
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