

Testimony for the Minnesota Senate E-12 Finance and Policy Committee

Opposition to House File 874

From: Leanne Overlander

Date: Friday, March 6, 2021

My name is Leanne Overlander and I have home schooled my 4 children for 23 years. I have significant concerns with the proposed amendment to the Minnesota Constitution.

Compared to the current Minnesota Constitution the proposed amendment contains language that is obscure and misleading which could suggest that a child who received a private education was being denied a fundamental right.

The term "quality". How would quality be defined, and by whom? The wording of the proposed amendment clearly indicates it would be the state deciding the definition. I feel that would be a huge governmental overreach and is very troubling.

The term "fully prepare" is wide open for interpretation. Children have varying abilities and learn differently. Suggesting that the state can guarantee them some specific opportunities or that the state could ever know what their full potential could be, is misleading and can only lead to discouragement.

By changing the current constitution, which I believe is needless and threatening, it would replace the responsibility of the parent to see that their child receives an education placing the state in control of education rather than the parent and the local school district. I believe it would be more effective if focus were given on strengthening the home and parents since studies show that a well-functioning home is key to success in all areas of life. A parent should still have the right to choose which form of education works best for their child, allowing for alternatives to public education, such as private, religious, or home schools.

I am concerned that this proposed amendment will lay the groundwork for the stripping away of more parental rights and opening the door for stronger state control of the family.

I am opposed to this amendment and encourage you to reject it.

Leanne Overlander

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leanne M Overlander". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'L' at the beginning.