

Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

My name is Jessica Larson and I am writing in opposition of House File 874 and ask you to reject the bill. The terms are vague and unclear, and pose many problems in the execution of the bill. Legislators should not legislate bills that take away rights we currently have and enjoy, and I feel this could be an unintended consequence of the bill as written.

We home educate our children by choice and feel that the option for parents to choose a means of educating their children other than public education must be preserved, specifically the right to home educate their children. I believe that the stated objectives should be managed at the school district level and should not require a vague amendment. I believe that parents should retain parental rights to make decisions about their child's education.

This bill comes before you in the era of COVID and the public health response to send children home from school. Circumstances led to reactionary emergency management and not planned execution of an intentional plan. Unprepared parents, unprepared teachers and school systems, lack of technology, and the constant barrage of negativity and focus on failures contributed to a horrible experience. Public education at home during COVID is no reflection on home education. There was nothing about public education at home that was comparable to home education other than the fact that public education took place in a home. To use this past year as a reason to mandate public education for all is based on false data and assumptions and is an invasion of parental rights that must be preserved.

I urge you to reject the bill as it is written. Thank you for your time.

Jessica Larson, home educator