

Hello, my name is Jodi Mansfield. I am writing today to oppose the Education Policy Omnibus Bill. I have homeschooled since my oldest was in kindergarten. He is now twenty-two. We have four children and our youngest is eleven and in fifth grade. This is our seventeenth year homeschooling. Throughout those years, I have been involved with many different homeschool groups and have gotten to know many different families. As a whole, the vast majority of families who homeschool their children do so because they want what's best for their children. Requiring us to jump through more hoops will not actually help students. The two of my students who are old enough to have taken the ACT have both done very well (my oldest receiving a perfect score of 36). They also do well on their yearly standardized testing so I do not oppose this bill out of fear or concern for accountability. I just believe strongly in parental rights. Minnesota Association of Christian Home Educators (MACHE) has done a great job of explaining how I feel so I am including their statement below.

"Specifically, we are concerned with the additional requirement of 'proof of prior testing plan' and a 'copy of the official test scores.' We are not clear why this onerous new requirement is being reintroduced at this time. There is no credible evidence to suggest that a change in homeschool standardized testing reporting requirements is necessary or useful. Plus, this reporting requirement is contrary to the 2011 Homeschool Mandate Reduction bill which paved the way to simpler reporting requirements for Minnesota homeschoolers. At that time, the school districts also concluded that they did not want to receive and maintain unnecessary paperwork from homeschoolers - nor do homeschoolers need or want the additional paperwork.

This would be a significant step backward for homeschooling freedom in Minnesota. It would impose unnecessary and burdensome requirements on Minnesota homeschoolers and districts. And, it could provide government officials or other agents with the unconstitutional authority to see private data. Parents should be the ones who decide how their children are educated."

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jodi Mansfield
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