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Testimony for: House Education Policy Committee
From: Amy R. Buchmeyer, JD, HSLDA Staff Attorney

Date: Wednesday, March 10, 2021

RE: Testimony in Opposition to DE Amendment/Education Omnibus Bill

My name is Amy Buchmeyer, and I am a Staff Attorney for the Home School Legal Defense Association, where we advocate for the rights of parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children. With over 100,000 member families, including several thousand in Minnesota, we are the world's largest homeschool advocacy organization.

I am speaking today to express concerns with the portion of this bill, found in lines 9.4 to 9.7, requiring homeschoolers to include "proof that the testing plan for the previous year was fulfilled," "a copy of the official test scores," and additional student information when submitting their subsequent notices of intent.

This is a burdensome and unnecessary addition to the reporting requirements for homeschoolers.

For context, to homeschool in Minnesota, parents must file an initial notice of intent to homeschool with their local superintendent. The notice of intent includes certain information, such as the name of the student, home address, and the test the parent plans to use to evaluate the student. A subsequent notice of intent gets filed each year.

The notice of intent to homeschool is precisely what the name says—a notice. It does not grant the superintendent authority to approve or deny a homeschool. Superintendents have no authority or responsibility for homeschoolers' academic growth or compliance with the law. There is no follow-up.

A notice of intent simply allows the superintendent to know, for recordkeeping purposes, that this student meets the compulsory education requirements.

If there is doubt about whether the homeschool family tested their student adequately, other provisions of the law come into effect.

Requiring homeschoolers to submit more documents with their subsequent notices of intent would result in nothing but more paperwork and wasted time for both parents and school districts.

I politely request you reconsider using this portion of the bill.

