

Testimony for Minnesota Senate E-12 Finance and Policy Committee

My name is Laurel Kelly and I currently homeschool my six children. I have two children that are not yet of school-age, but I consider education to start from birth. I am sure many of you who are listening to this are parents. Do you feel that you have more interest in the well-being of your children than other adults or other government bureaucrats? Or do you think that the state cares for your children and loves them more than you do? You know the answer to this question is the same for all of us and that is – of course not! No one can possibly care as much about a child than the parents. Yet, this bill gives the government the right to take children out of their homes and be educated in a way in which the parents disagree. If parents find that public schools are the best institutions for educating their children, they will voluntarily send them to these schools. However, if a parent believes that the child can be taught better at home or at another private setting, then that is exactly how it should happen for that child. I don't think any of us want the government to ultimately have the final say over all the millions of important decisions that go into raising a child. I am sure you all believe that you know what is best for your child. Every parent should reserve that right, without having to give it up to the state. If you do not agree with this, then you believe that the moment a mother gives birth to a child, she must cede all decision making to other authorities who have been deemed more fit to raise the child. Or perhaps you think, no not at birth, but at age five the parent must cede all rights to those decisions? Truly, what is the difference? I hope you see the absurdity of this bill.

Please thoughtfully consider the consequences of the wording you have chosen for this constitutional amendment. It seems as though some authoritarian thinking is permeating the

legislature and those in charge of this bill would like to see all children indoctrinated by state sponsored schools. Perhaps they want to ensure that every child is taught to support big government solutions and to want more government involvement in all areas of life. There is a conflict of interest here- certainly the publicly funded schools will always support a bigger government. That is where their paycheck comes from! They have an interest in teaching the young people that a big government is good and more money should be taxed from the private sector to pay for more and more of it. We must put an end to this groupthink. We must always allow for freedom to teach our own children in a variety of settings, which will ensure that students grow up to think independently. Otherwise, we will all be cogs in the system, not individuals with rights.

Additionally, [by pretty much any measure](#), homeschooling students continue to perform above students from traditional schools.

On behalf of all homeschoolers, leave us alone.

Laurel