

Delegate Ruth Shields,

March 1, 2022

Please do not push Bill 832! The homeschooling community includes a broad coalition of parents and organizations united in purpose to preserve the liberty to homeschool. I do not believe an advisory council is necessary to maintain this liberty. While well-intended, this bill would create a quasi-official source for information on homeschooling, which would, in turn, minimize the effectiveness of grassroots homeschool groups and individual advocates.

Homeschooling has thrived for decades without government assistance. Instead of creating a new bureaucratic entity to gather information on the needs of homeschool programs, HSLDA encourages government entities and actors to respect homeschooling programs by preserving liberty and avoiding unnecessary regulation. An abundance of innovative, privately funded, and often volunteer-run organizations currently study and meet the needs of the homeschooling community. Thus, an official advisory council is unnecessary and would likely do more harm than good in the future.

In summary, I oppose House Bill 832 Because:

1. It would minimize the voices of grassroots homeschool advocates and organizations by creating a bureaucratic entity to be the designated voice on homeschool policy.
2. It follows a model in New Hampshire that we do not think would work in Maryland.
3. It is unnecessary because homeschoolers are not asking for government-funded services.

Respectfully,

Cathryn Eckley, (A homeschooling mother of four amazing sons.)