

HB 832: Homeschool Advisory Council Ways & Means Committee Hearing: Thursday, March 3, 2022

FAVORABLE Testimony FOR HB 832 provided by: Alessandra Keener, M.Ed.
Maryland Homeschool Association

Rationale for HB 832

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has the legal authority to create regulations and policies that oversee how homeschooling operates throughout the state. While individual homeschool leaders have worked hard throughout the years to create professional, working relationships with MSDE, the state is not obligated to consult with homeschoolers before making policy decisions that affect homeschool families.

For example, at a 2018 interested parties meeting, called by MSDE to review a proposed regulatory change, not one current homeschool parent had been invited to attend. Additionally, not a single person of color or non-Christian person was at the table. As a representative of the Maryland Homeschool Association, I did attend that meeting and was joined by several, much older white men, all of whom own private schools. In fact, one of the individuals at the table was a retired public school teacher.

In another example, MSDE meets quarterly with county-employed representatives from throughout the state. These meetings are held exclusively to discuss concerns Maryland counties have with how homeschooling is taking place within their jurisdiction. Often, these meetings result in policy decisions being made. For more than five years, I have repeatedly requested an invitation to attend these meetings as an observer. To date, MSDE has declined to regularly allow non-governmental employees to attend.

Summary: House Bill 832 would create a Homeschool Advisory Council, giving statewide homeschoolers a legally recognized voice in advising the state on equitable homeschool policies and regulatory development. The council would be required to be representative of the diverse voices of homeschool families, including race, religion, geography, and homeschool philosophy criteria.

Who Drafted HB 832

A social media call for volunteers was made to the Maryland Homeschoolers Facebook group in 2021. This private group had just over 10,000 members on the day of the post. The post specifically asked for volunteers to meet via zoom to discuss legislative priorities for the 2022 General Assembly. The post generated a 7% engagement rate from its total reached audience. That engagement rate is more than double than what is considered the industry standard “click-through rate”, had we utilized a direct email marketing approach. [SEE <https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-benchmarks/>] NOTE: The Maryland Homeschool Association does not have access to a complete database of all Maryland homeschool families, so direct email contact was not even an option.

The subsequent group of volunteers meet by way of zoom, phone calls, and email to discuss legislative concerns. After researching current advisory councils that work in conjunction with MSDE, the group worked to draft the language for this bill. The group identified Delegate Sheila Ruth as a potential lead sponsor, as she homeschooled her own son from 1st grade and until college. As with any bill, the

originally proposed language was changed and adapted after conversations with Delegate Ruth, as well as feedback from Legislative Services.

Summary: An open call for volunteers was made to the wider homeschool community through social media in 2021. Ultimately, volunteers from four different counties worked on this bill.

Council Composition

The original proposal in HB 832 calls for a Homeschool Advisory Council to be composed of 16 members. Four seats are reserved for MSDE, Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and county homeschool liaisons. Four seats would be appointed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate President. These sole political appointments are required to be two homeschool veterans and two homeschool umbrella directors. The remaining council seats would come from a pool of self-nominations of currently homeschooling parents. The bill directs the initial council of eight members to select from that pool of applicants a representative body that reflects the rich diversity of homeschool families throughout the state of Maryland. Diversity criteria includes race, religion (including secular families), geography, and homeschool philosophy.

I am in full support for Delegate Ruth’s amendment to change the council composition slightly. Specifically, phasing out the four political appointments AFTER the initial council is formed and removing the two veteran homeschool representatives from the council at the conclusion of the first term allows for the council to operate as a voice of homeschooling by actual homeschoolers.

Summary: The Maryland Homeschool Advisory Council is designed to operate as a legally recognized voice of actual homeschoolers, working in conjunction with MSDE and MHEC. Through a self-nomination process that is governed by a specific set of diversity selection criteria, the council is set up to be a truly representative body for the Maryland homeschool community.

Homeschool Demographics

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Pulse Survey, nationwide homeschool rates have “remained steady at around 3.3%”, up until 2012 [SEE: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/03/homeschooling-on-the-rise-during-covid-19-pandemic.html>] Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was widely reported that about 2 million children were educated at home.

Pre-pandemic homeschoolers in Maryland numbered 27,742. The number of homeschooled children rose to 42,632 by June 2021 [SEE Addendum #1]. It is widely anticipated that homeschool numbers will drop significantly as families feel more comfortable with health safety risks lowering, as vaccine availability for children increases.

Maryland Homeschoolers

Approximate Number of Families Homeschooling in Maryland*

County	PRE Covid	June 2021
Allegany	105	144
Anne Arundel	942	1,614
Baltimore City	482	626
Baltimore County	1,255	1,726
Calvert	242	553
Caroline	124	157
Carroll	425	696
Cecil	320	477
Charles	357	603
Dorchester	62	104
Frederick	757	949
Garrett	57	82

County	PRE Covid	June 2021
Harford	269	801
Howard	439	689
Kent	27	53
Montgomery	971	1,502
Prince George's	1,059	1,444
Queen Anne's	116	240
St. Mary's	392	523
Somerset	69	66
Talbot	65	95
Washington	400	609
Wicomico	224	312
Worcester	91	146

* The US Census Bureau reports the average American family now has 1.93 children under the age of 18. This chart, however, assumed the average Maryland homeschool family has three children. The decision was made, in part, because Maryland has one of the highest orthodox Jewish homeschool rates in the country, with most of those families based in Baltimore and Montgomery counties and Baltimore City. Additionally, many conservative Christian homeschool families live in Southern Maryland. It is widely accepted that these two sub-populations of homeschool families often have four or more children each.

Reasons for Homeschooling

The National Center for Educational Statistics, a research branch of the U.S. Department of Education provides the most reliable information on nationwide homeschooling statistics and trends. [SEE Addendum #2]. According to NCEES – and regardless of a family's race – the single, most important reason parents give for homeschooling their children: *“a concern about school environment, such as safety, drugs, or negative peer pressure”*.

The second most important reason parents give for homeschooling is *“a dissatisfaction with the academic instruction”*. Only 20% of White parents cite *“a desire to provide religious instruction”* as their most important reason to homeschool. With the exception of 6% of Hispanic families, no other racial group places religion as a reason for why they chose to educate their children at home.

Summary: The covid pandemic saw the number of homeschool children in Maryland grow from 27,742 in 2019 to 42,632 by June 2021. In terms of actual number of families, we know that some counties, such as Kent and Garrett, had less than 100 homeschool families each, pre-pandemic. The most populous homeschool counties, including Baltimore and Prince George's, had around 1,500 or fewer homeschool families each. According the National Center for

Educational Statistics, the vast majority of families cite “*a concern about school environment, such as safety, drugs, or negative peer pressure*” as their #1 reason for homeschooling. Homeschooling for religious reasons is cited as the most important reason to homeschool by only 16% of homeschool families nationwide.

Why So Much Vocal Opposition to HB 832

Opposition to HB 832 stems from two distinct sources.

Opposition from Delegate Lauren Arikan

Delegate Arikan (R, Harford County) happens to be a homeschool parent who has been extremely vocal in her beliefs that government should have zero involvement with homeschooling. The day that HB 832 had its first reading in the House, Del. Arikan released a YouTube video criticizing the bill and demanding that it be withdrawn [SEE <https://youtu.be/-uWxLvnMD-4> and <https://youtu.be/1kkys8fh1Kg>]. Her first video was made WITHOUT the benefit of having read the text of the bill. As such, the video and ensuing social media posts were full of inflammatory statements and misinformation. Given the nature of social media, her message caused a level of hysteria within the homeschool community, as families waited days for the opportunity to read the actual bill. Individuals who align with Del. Arikan’s anti-government sentiment took to online bullying of anyone who spoke in support of the bill. Some of Del. Arikan’s followers proudly posted online that they were calling delegates and committee members multiple times and spamming elected officials with multiple emails [SEE Addendum #3].

At no time during her active campaign to influence the outcome of HB 832 did Del. Arikan ever disclose to the Maryland General Assembly or to the public at large that she has a conflict of interest due to her financial interest in a homeschool umbrella that she owns, namely Sequoia Fellowship Umbrella. Homeschool umbrellas exist under COMAR 13A.10.05 and are registered through the Maryland State Department of Education. Homeschool umbrellas offer families an opportunity to complete their portfolio reviews through a non-governmental review process. It is widely known throughout the homeschool community that a handful of umbrellas operate through fear messaging with families who oppose all government involvement in their lives. NOTE: No specific oversight exists for Maryland homeschool umbrellas to ensure that they are, in fact, fulfilling their legal obligation of documenting that families have provided “regular, thorough instruction” to their children, despite taking money from families to do so.

Opposition from the Homeschool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)

HSLDA is an ultra-conservative Christian organization based in Virginia. One of HSLDA’s founding attorneys, Mike Farris, now leads the Alliance Defending Freedom group, an organization designated as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center [SEE Addendum #4]. Mr. Farris and, by extension HSLDA, has a well-documented history of:

- Lobbying against mandatory reporting laws for child abuse
- Opposing the UN’s human rights declaration
- Anti-LGBTQ work

HSLDA's website boasts over 100,000 worldwide members who pay \$130 per year in dues [SEE Addendum #5]. That number, presumably, includes lifetime members who may have joined HSLDA more than a decade ago but no longer homeschool. Interestingly, though, HSLDA's 990 Form (an annual IRS required filing) states that HSLDA had \$8,811,858 in membership dues in 2018 [SEE Addendum #6]. Based on HSLDA's reporting to the IRS, they would actually only have 67,784 actively paid worldwide members. If one were to assume that three-quarters of HSLDA members reside in the United States – and then generously divide that number by 50 (and not account for the proportional differences in the number of homeschoolers in states like Texas and California, versus Maryland), then basic math tells us that HSLDA may represent – at most – 10% of all Maryland homeschool families.

With an operating budget of more than \$13 MILLION in 2018 [SEE Addendum #7], HSLDA has the resources to hire powerful public relations firms to fight against bills they deem in poor interest of homeschooling. In the case of HB 832, HSLDA has been working with Fifth Avenue Brands, based in Rockefeller Plaza in New York City [SEE Addendum #8]. HSLDA has systematically been feeding biased and factually incorrect information relating to the bill to right-wing media sources and making claims such as, “. . . a democrat-led bill that will create an ‘advisory council’ to collect data on homeschooling families. The aim of the council is to increase government overview of families . . .”

NOTE: The words “research”, “data”, and “collect” DO NOT appear in the text of HB 832.

These falsehoods promoted by HSLDA are being printed with little to no attempt by right wing media to interview opposing viewpoints. Sadly, the effects are clear: People read the news and believe it to be true without doing their own fact checking. As a result, hysteria has continued.

So, Why All the Fuss?

The question remains: Why? Why would Del. Arian and HSLDA put forth so much effort to kill a bill that seeks to:

1. Offer greater transparency to the policy making and regulatory process that directly impacts homeschooling; and
2. Allow for greater participation in those processes by people of color, as well as secular and non-Christian families?

I, personally, cannot answer that question. But, I do find it curious that people and organizations focused on personal liberties would so vociferously attempt to squash a bill that makes the democratic process more accessible to a more fully representative body of people.

Summary: Vehement and loud opposition from a segment of homeschoolers makes it appear as though there is large opposition to this bill. While the opposing side may have a multi-million dollar spin machine amplifying their rhetoric, the facts show that neither Del. Arian nor HSLDA represent the vast majority of Maryland homeschool families, neither in their political beliefs nor in the reasons for homeschooling.

New Hampshire’s Homeschool Advisory Council

New Hampshire stands as the only state in America that currently has a homeschool advisory council that works with their state department of education. Their council is entirely appointed, whereas Maryland’s proposed council allows homeschool parents to self-nominate and the selection process is governed by diversity criteria.

New Hampshire is widely considered a libertarian state. Frank Edelblut, their state commissioner for education (comparable to MSDE’s superintendent position) is a homeschool father [SEE: <https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/commissioner/about>]. New Hampshire is pro school choice state that advocates for school voucher programs

Summary: Despite being held up by HSLDA as a cautionary tale of “good intentions gone wrong”, New Hampshire’s Homeschool Advisory Council operates in a distinctly different political environment than would exist in Maryland. Without an in-depth and objective study of the politics and outcomes of this council, any criticisms made of it amount to nothing more than hearsay, subjective opinion, and pure speculation.

Conclusion

For the numerous reasons listed in this written testimony, I ask that you give HB 832 a FAVORABLE vote at your next committee meeting.

Respectfully,
Alessandra Giampaolo Keener, M.Ed.
Reisterstown MD
on behalf of the Maryland Homeschool Association

Biography for Alessandra Giampaolo Keener

Alessandra Keener, M.Ed. holds a master’s degree in education and a certificate in gifted education from The Johns Hopkins University. She also holds a certificate in special education advocacy from William and Mary Law School. While Alessandra homeschooled her children from kindergarten into college, she now works as an educational advocate and professional curriculum developer. For more than 10 years, Alessandra has served as an expert witness in numerous divorce, custody, and criminal justice matters that involve mitigating educational issues for a variety of special student populations, including children represented by the Maryland Office of the Public Defenders.

Maryland Homeschool Association History

After years of providing the Maryland homeschool community with legislative updates through other means, Alessandra Keener launched the Maryland Homeschool Association in 2014, primarily as a website to offer free, reliable, and objective information about the rights and responsibilities of homeschoolers in Maryland. For years, Maryland families have relied on MDHSA as its sole source of timely information and call-to-action alerts coming directly from in-state homeschoolers. MDHSA has always been an all-volunteer, grassroots organization. MDHSA does not charge a membership fee.

Addendum #1: Number of children homeschooled in Maryland, as reported by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Total Number of Students Taught Through Home Schooling as Reported by Each Local School System 2006-2021

Local School System	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Allegany	233	223	220	207	208	211	246	270	263	271	276	318	318	314	431
Anne Arundel	1,826	1,817	1,846	1,800	1,863	1,790	1,910	2,236	2,450	2,266	2,550	2,544	2,715	2,825	4,841
Baltimore City	1,661	1,364	1,006	1,087	1,005	1,017	1,036	1,150	1,150	1,202	1,355	1,379	1,437	1,445	1,878
Baltimore County	2,914	2,594	2,596	2,508	2,488	2,305	2,385	2,547	2,631	2,663	2,750	3,035	3,213	3,765	5,178
Calvert	539	609	442	397	389	364	408	426	458	473	518	641	725	725	1,660
Caroline	166	174	145	169	163	160	165	190	200	203	221	303	348	373	470
C Carroll	1,586	1,291	1,327	1,291	1,277	1,181	1,193	1,211	1,202	1,425	1,218	1,317	1,265	1,276	2,089
Cecil	1,245	1,259	1,397	1,535	1,097	1,172	1,124	1,217	1,094	1,213	1,283	1,226	1,322	961	1,432
Charles	823	886	1,052	1,186	1,363	1,533	1,388	1,191	1,008	784	881	997	1,037	1,072	1,810
Dorchester	86	85	84	77	85	77	80	92	103	95	137	154	185	312	
Frederick	1,711	1,750	1,841	1,969	2,305	2,303	3,018	3,413	3,778	4,186	4,633	4,892	5,086	5,270	2,846
Garrett	291	268	291	319	342	318	160	336	293	304	306	342	295	172	246
Harford	1,593	1,665	1,480	1,446	1,401	1,580	1,698	1,738	1,745	1,774	1,860	1,702	1,754	808	2,403
Howard	1,694	1,694	1,006	1,226	1,188	1,180	1,004	1,027	995	962	1,279	1,323	1,247	1,318	2,066
Kent	68	68	67	72	61	66	62	65	77	70	91	91	113	82	159
Montgomery	2,242	2,783	3,010	2,734	2,418	2,550	2,570	2,665	2,613	2,854	2,379	2,355	2,510	2,914	4,505
Prince George's	3,759	3,500	4,548	2,991	2,147	2,913	3,332	3,877	4,051	3,966	2,899	3,095	3,327	3,177	4,332
Queen Anne's	283	292	274	266	267	240	239	255	270	282	285	287	322	349	721
St. Mary's	365	360	665	647	668	699	687	737	856	818	907	1,012	1,109	1,177	1,570
Somerset	74	66	62	72	49	61	52	89	93	114	98	159	202	208	198
Talbot	117	128	65	66	77	103	119	114	113	133	146	156	172	194	285
Washington	518	765	758	774	754	797	916	965	927	948	1,018	1,099	1,146	1,199	1,827
Wicomico	397	340	369	350	380	341	392	443	449	573	568	531	657	671	936
Worcester	86	93	83	98	115	108	118	180	156	163	190	82	231	274	437
Total	24,277	24,074	24,634	23,287	22,110	23,069	24,302	26,434	26,975	27,742	27,828	26,040	27,551	27,754	42,632

Retrieved from

<https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DSFSS/SSSP/HomeInstruct/HomeSchool14YearReport20062021.pdf>

Addendum #2: National Center for Education Statistics (U.S. Department of Education), Reports on Homeschooling

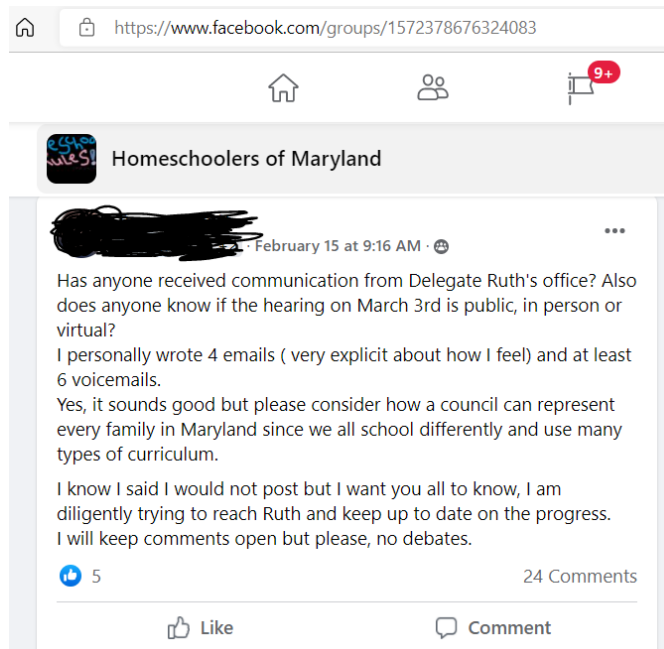
Table 206.15. Percentage and percentage distribution of homeschooled students ages 5 through 17 with a grade equivalent of kindergarten through grade 12, by reasons their parents gave for homeschooling, the one reason their parents identified as most important, and race/ethnicity of child: 2015-16

[Standard errors appear in parentheses]

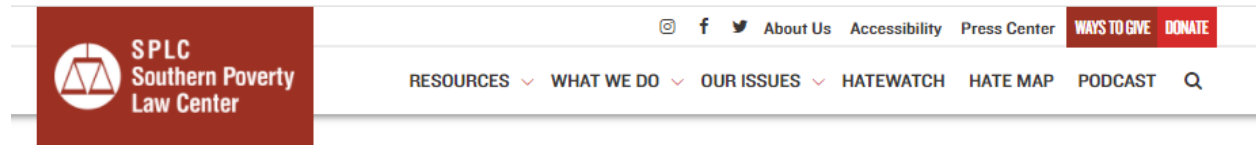
Reason for homeschooling	Percentage distribution of homeschooled students, by the one reason identified by their parents as most important ²					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	Other ³
1	3	5	7	9	11	13
A concern about school environment, such as safety, drugs, or negative peer pressure	33.8 (3.15)	28.0 (2.94)	32.4! (11.73)	47.9 (8.20)	± (±)	33.7 (8.23)
A dissatisfaction with the academic instruction at other schools	17.0 (2.16)	18.7 (2.62)	15.0! (6.11)	10.5! (3.90)	± (±)	35.8 (10.70)
A desire to provide religious instruction	15.9 (2.68)	20.8 (3.83)	± (±)	6.5! (2.71)	± (±)	± (±)
A desire to provide moral instruction	4.7 (1.27)	5.6! (1.87)	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)
Child has a physical or mental health problem	5.5 (1.19)	4.7 (1.37)	± (±)	9.0! (3.11)	± (±)	± (±)
Child has a temporary illness ⁴	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)
Child has other special needs	5.8 (1.26)	4.4 (1.20)	11.9! (5.82)	6.6! (2.89)	± (±)	± (±)
A desire to provide a nontraditional approach to child's education	5.6 (1.18)	8.2 (1.97)	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)	± (±)
Other reasons ⁵	11.4 (1.85)	9.1 (2.30)	24.5! (9.52)	14.1! (5.06)	± (±)	± (±)

Retrieved from: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19_206.15.asp

Addendum #3: Screenshot from the Homeschoolers of Maryland Facebook group



Addendum #4: Southern Poverty Law Center designated hate group entry for Alliance Defending Freedom, led by Homeschool Legal Defense Association’s founder, Michael Farris



ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM

Founded by some 30 leaders of the Christian Right, the Alliance Defending Freedom is a legal advocacy and training group that has supported the recriminalization of sexual acts between consenting LGBTQ adults in the U.S. and criminalization abroad; has defended state-sanctioned sterilization of trans people abroad; has contended that LGBTQ people are more likely to engage in pedophilia; and claims that a “homosexual agenda” will destroy Christianity and society. ADF also works to develop “religious liberty” legislation and case law that will allow the denial of goods and services to LGBTQ people on the basis of religion. Since the election of President Trump, ADF has become one of the most influential groups informing the administration’s attack on LGBTQ rights.



EXTREMIST GROUP INFO:

SPLC DESIGNATED HATE GROUP

Date Founded: 1994

Location: Scottsdale, Ariz.

Ideology: [Anti-LGBTQ](#)

Founded by some 30 leaders of the Christian Right, the Alliance Defending Freedom is a legal advocacy and training group that has:

- Supported the recriminalization of sexual acts between consenting LGBTQ adults in the U.S. and criminalization abroad
- [Defended state-sanctioned sterilization of trans people abroad](#)
- [Contended that LGBTQ people are more likely to engage in pedophilia](#)
- Claimed that a “homosexual agenda” [will destroy Christianity and society](#).

ADF also works to develop “religious liberty” legislation and case law that will allow the denial of goods and services to LGBTQ people on the basis of religion. Despite its regular defamation of LGBTQ people, the group has managed to win special advisory status at the United Nations, in the European Union, and with the Organization of American States. Since the election of President Trump, ADF has become one of the most influential groups informing the administration’s attack on LGBTQ rights



In January 2017, ADF named longtime theocratic right-wing activist, attorney and Baptist minister [Michael Farris](#) as its second president, CEO, and general counsel. Farris left the Convention of States, which he co-founded in 2013, to take the position at ADF. The Convention of States advocates for holding just what its name implies—a convention of states—to add amendments to the Constitution in order to stop “the federal spending and debt spree, the power grabs of the federal courts, and other misuses of federal power.”

Farris’ history in the religious right dates back to the 1970s, when he opposed the Equal Rights Amendment. In the early 1980s, he was head of Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority in Washington state, and, in 1983, he founded the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), a legal advocacy group that is also a ministry to “defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms.” According to its mission statement, the HSLDA relies on “parental rights” and “religious freedom” to guarantee the “fundamental, God-given, constitutional right of parents and others legally responsible for their children to direct their education.”

Farris also [signed on to the original 1986 Coalition of Revival](#) (COR) Manifesto, the same year that he served as treasurer for the Committee to Draft Pat Robertson for President. Farris was part of the COR steering committee. Among COR’s positions was this one: “We deny that anyone, Jew or Gentile, believer or unbeliever, private person or public person is exempt from the moral and juridical obligation before God to submit to Christ’s Lordship over every aspect of his life in thought, word and deed.” Another COR requirement was that one be “willing to be martyred for Jesus Christ and the establishment of his Kingdom here on earth” and also be willing to submit to the “hierarchical order” God has created, “in which we are willing to submit as to Christ to employers, civil government, and church leaders, and within families, wives to their husbands, and children to their parents.”

Retrieved from: <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/alliance-defending-freedom>


Addendum #5: Homeschool Legal Defense Association’s home webpage

← → ↻ hsllda.org

Update


WHAT WE DO

With over 100,000 member families, Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) is the nation’s largest, most trusted homeschool advocacy organization. We’re here to advance and protect your freedom to homeschool.




Legal Protection

We protect your right to homeschool in court, advocate for homeschool freedom in state legislatures, and work to advance homeschooling in the public arena.



Educational Support

Our highly trained consultants offer personalized guidance and answers for every stage of homeschooling—including getting started, learning disabilities, and high school.



Strength in Community

Through the combined efforts of our community we make it possible for all families to experience the joys of homeschool freedom.

[Learn About HSLDA Member Benefits »](#)

Addendum #6: Form 990 for Homeschool Legal Defense Association, page 9 which shows HSLDA's 2018 total revenue for membership dues.

Form 990 (2018) Page 9

Part VIII Statement of Revenue
 Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part VIII

		(A) Total revenue	(B) Related or exempt function revenue	(C) Unrelated business revenue	(D) Revenue excluded from tax under sections 512-514	
Contributions, Gifts, Grants and Similar Amounts	1a Federated campaigns	1a 13,614				
	b Membership dues	1b 8,811,859				
	c Fundraising events	1c				
	d Related organizations	1d 307,339				
	e Government grants (contributions)	1e				
	f All other contributions, gifts, grants, and similar amounts not included above	1f 2,033,112				
	g Noncash contributions included in lines 1a-1f \$					
	h Total. Add lines 1a-1f		11,165,924			
Program Service Revenue	Business Code					
	2a Conference & Seminars		219,480	219,480		
	b Advertising & Publications		187,113		187,113	
	c Education Support		1,307,999	1,307,999		
	d					
	e					
	f All other program service revenue					
g Total. Add lines 2a-2f		1,714,592				
Other Revenue	3 Investment income (including dividends, interest, and other similar amounts)		(13,945)		(13,945)	
	4 Income from investment of tax-exempt bond proceeds					
	5 Royalties		68,537		68,537	
	6a Gross rents	(i) Real				
		(ii) Personal				
	b Less rental expenses					
	c Rental income or (loss)					
	d Net rental income or (loss)					
	7a Gross amount from sales of assets other than inventory	(i) Securities				
		(ii) Other				
	b Less cost or other basis and sales expenses					
	c Gain or (loss)					
	d Net gain or (loss)					
	8a Gross income from fundraising events (not including \$ of contributions reported on line 1c) See Part IV, line 18	a				
b Less direct expenses	b					
c Net income or (loss) from fundraising events						
9a Gross income from gaming activities. See Part IV, line 19	a					
b Less direct expenses	b					
c Net income or (loss) from gaming activities						
10a Gross sales of inventory, less returns and allowances	a	641,611				
b Less cost of goods sold	b	217,665				
c Net income or (loss) from sales of inventory		423,946		6,219		
Miscellaneous Revenue		Business Code				
11a						
b						
c						
d All other revenue						
e Total. Add lines 11a-11d						
12 Total revenue. See instructions		13,359,054	1,527,479	193,332	54,592	

Form 990 (2018)

Retrieved from: https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/521354365/03_2021_prefixes_47-52%2F521354365_201903_990_2021031017792655

Addendum #7: Form 990 for Homeschool Legal Defense Association, page 1 which shows HSLDA's general revenue and expenses for 2018.

2949307402806 0



Form 990

Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax

Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except private foundations)

▶ Do not enter social security numbers on this form as it may be made public. **903**

▶ Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.

OMB No 1545-0047

2018

Open to Public Inspection

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

A For the 2018 calendar year, or tax year beginning April 1, 2018, and ending March 31, 2019

B Check if applicable:
 Address change
 Name change
 Initial return
 Final return/terminated
 Amended return
 Application pending

C Name of organization: Home School Legal Defense Association
 Doing business as: HSLDA
 Number and street (or P.O. box if mail is not delivered to street address): 1 Patrick Henry Circle
 Room/suite:
 City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code: Purcellville, VA 20132

D Employer identification number: 52-1354365

E Telephone number: 540-338-5600

G Gross receipts \$: 13,359,054

F Name and address of principal officer:
J Michael Smith, One Patrick Henry Circle, Purcellville, VA 20132

H(a) Is this a group return for subordinates? Yes No
H(b) Are all subordinates included? Yes No
 If "No," attach a list (see instructions)

I Tax-exempt status: 501(c)(3) 501(c) () (insert no.) 4947(a)(1) or 527 **03**

J Website: www.hslda.org

K Form of organization: Corporation Trust Association Other ▶

L Year of formation: 1994 **M** State of legal domicile: VA

Part I Summary

1 Briefly describe the organization's mission or most significant activities. HSLDA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children, and to protect family freedoms.

2 Check this box if the organization discontinued its operations or disposed of more than 25% of its net assets.

3 Number of voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1a) 3 **6**

4 Number of independent voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1b) 4 **5**

5 Total number of individuals employed in calendar year 2018 (Part V, line 2a) 213 **5**

6 Total number of volunteers (estimate if necessary) 40 **6**

7a Total unrelated business revenue from Part VIII, column (C), line 12 193,332 **7a**

7b Net unrelated business taxable income from Form 990-T, line 48 57,952 **7b**

	Prior Year	Current Year
8 Contributions and grants (Part VIII, line 1h)	2,074,946	11,165,924
9 Program service revenue (Part VIII, line 2g)	0	1,714,592
10 Investment income (Part VIII, column (A), lines 3, 4, and 5)	2,691	(13,945)
11 Other revenue (Part VIII, column (A), lines 5, 6d, 9c, 10c, and 11)	10,836	492,483
12 Total revenue—add lines 8 through 11 (must equal Part VIII, column (C), line 12)	2,088,473	13,359,054
13 Grants and similar amounts paid (Part IX, column (A), lines 1-8)	1,557,659	965,480
14 Benefits paid to or for members (Part IX, column (A), line 4)	0	0
15 Salaries, other compensation, employee benefits (Part IX, column (A), lines 5-10)	0	7,366,002
16a Professional fundraising fees (Part IX, column (A), line 11a)	0	0
b Total fundraising expenses (Part IX, column (D), line 25) <u>1,535,263</u>		
17 Other expenses (Part IX, column (A), lines 11a-11d, 11f-24e)	692,642	3,760,143
18 Total expenses Add lines 13-17 (must equal Part IX, column (A), line 25)	2,250,297	12,091,625
19 Revenue less expenses Subtract line 18 from line 12	(161,824)	1,267,429
	Beginning of Current Year	End of Year
20 Total assets (Part X, line 16)	835,488	4,561,250
21 Total liabilities (Part X, line 26)	62,686	9,949,114
22 Net assets or fund balances Subtract line 21 from line 20	772,802	(5,387,864)

Part II Signature Block

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this return, including accompanying schedules and statements, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete. Declaration of preparer (other than officer) is based on all information of which preparer has any knowledge.

Sign Here
 Signature of officer: J Michael Smith Date: 11/15/19
 Type or print name and title: J Michael Smith, President

Paid Preparer Use Only
 Print/Type preparer's name: _____ Preparer's signature: _____ Date: _____
 Check if self-employed PTIN: _____
 Firm's name: _____ Firm's EIN: _____
 Firm's address: _____ Phone no: _____

May the IRS discuss this return with the preparer shown above? (see instructions) Yes No

For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the separate instructions. Cat No 11282Y Form 990 (2018)

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Addendum #8: Email sent by HSLDA’s public relations firm based in Rockefeller Center, New York City, soliciting conservative media channels to publish misleading news reports about HSLDA.

On Thu, Feb 17, 2022 at 9:46 AM Richard Lorenzen <rlorenzen@fifthavenuebrands.com> wrote:

Hi Sean,

Maryland’s state legislature recently proposed a democrat-led bill that will create an “advisory council” to collect data on homeschooling families. The aim of the council is to increase government overview of families and identify possibilities for regulation.

Conservative legal experts have sounded alarms on the news for its risks of government overreach and infringement on the federally protected right for families to homeschool their children without government influence.

[HSLDA](#), the largest homeschool legal advocacy group in the US, is speaking out about the threat the proposed council poses to education and religious liberties for American families.

HSLDA’s senior counsel, Michael Donnelly, would love to give an interview about the risks of government overreach that threaten not just families in Maryland but nationwide.

Any interest in connecting with him?

Best,
Richard



**RICHARD LORENZEN, CEO
FIFTH AVENUE BRANDS**

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Retrieved from a private email that had been forwarded by a reporter from The Washington Times newspaper.