

March 1, 2022

Re: HB 832

To the current members of the Maryland House Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for turning your attention to the needs of homeschoolers in the state of Maryland. Unfortunately, this council is likely to *underrepresent* the vast majority of us who are too busy taking care of and educating our children to drive to Annapolis or Baltimore for regular meetings. It would provide another bureaucratic obstacle to our family's success in educating our children, by blocking direct access to the Maryland State Department of Education and legislature. Questions from legislators or state officials about homeschooling would be redirected to the council, rather than broadly asked to the entire population of homeschooling families in the state. In particular, rural areas — which struggle with unique problems of access to healthcare, education, and other essential services — would be sorely neglected by such a council.

As I hope that homeschoolers have demonstrated over the last month since the bill was introduced, we are capable of speaking for ourselves when we see the need to do so. In fact, in my eight years of homeschooling, I have found that our relationship with our local county homeschool monitors is very healthy and positive, and I am very satisfied with my ability to communicate directly and effectively with local and state government officials. No intermediary council is necessary.

I believe our greatest need is for friends, family, neighbors, and community members who live in our neighborhoods and towns to join with us in keeping our children safe, healthy, and educated. A council meeting can't supply that need, because the council will be meeting far away from our homes and schools, without understanding the varied and specific needs of each one of us. Only we can speak directly to those needs, for our own families.

If you still wish to support homeschoolers further, you could simply send us a check for each child we are homeschooling. It would be very welcome!

With gratitude,

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