

Chair: Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary
Vice Chair: Delegate Alonzo Washington
Ways and Means Committee

House Bill 832; Homeschool Advisory Council
Hearing on March 3, 2022

In Opposition to HB 832

To the Honorable Delegates of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Nyssa Parampil, and I am testifying against the House Bill 832. As a homeschooling parent of seven years and counting, I am grateful for the Maryland homeschooling laws. Maryland's good homeschooling laws were shaped by the varying voices of individual homeschoolers not by a legislative advisory council. The proposed HB 832 for a Homeschool Advisory Council within the State Department of Education is not only unnecessary but alarming that a dozen self-nominating people and a few political appointees could represent the wide-ranging diversity of homeschoolers. Homeschoolers across Maryland have not asked for this council. Why not return to the regular meetings between Maryland's State Department of Education and homeschoolers that used to occur in years past?

Since homeschoolers do not receive government funding for education, a council within the government appears misplaced. Its design could easily manifest into the sole source of homeschooler's "voices" without required accountability or transparency to the homeschool community at large. Any proposed amendments cannot correct a fundamentally flawed and unnecessary bill.

The approach is not an effective mechanism and will minimize the existing grassroots voices of homeschool groups and individual advocates. Please oppose HB 832. Thank you for your consideration.

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