

To: Delegate Ruth / Ways and Means Committee

In Reference to: HB0832 Maryland Homeschool Advisory Council Establishment

From: Adam & Tiffany Doering (Homeschool parents of three MD students)

Delegate Ruth and Committee Members,

We are writing in strong opposition to HB0832 which increases barriers between the Homeschool community and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Creating a 16-member council to represent thousands of homeschooling families will dilute parental voice and influence while creating additional layers of bureaucracy designed to serve board members and their lobbies over parents. We also have great concern on what appears to be a deliberate act to rush HB0832 through the legislative session without seeking feedback from active homeschooling parents during the drafting of the bill. For example, our family has homeschooled since the beginning of the pandemic maintaining compliance with the Prince Georges County School System, yet we received zero communication from the county or state regarding HB0832. Instead, HB0832 was brought to our attention by a fellow homeschooling family and neighbor who received the information from their umbrella organization.

Transparency, or a lack of, is a telling indicator of a bill's true motivation and the agendas behind it. Deliberately excluding a key block of voters/taxpayers who are actively registered with a state entity is concerning to say the least. Why take this approach if the bill is indeed beneficial to homeschooling parents? Why replace the current engagement process that hears the voices of ALL parents with a 16-member council with no accountability to the parents who must teach, instruct, and mentor daily? Two years of continued refusal to teach by the local school system forced us into homeschooling for the benefit of our children at a significant time and financial cost. Now similar state entities want greater control over our children. Enough is enough. Kill bill HB0832. Protect parental voice. Protect our children against ineffective bureaucracy.

Respectfully,

Adam and Tiffany Doering

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