

OPPOSE

HB 832-Creates a Homeschool Advisory Council in MSDE-OPPOSE

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While well-intentioned, this bill would create a quasi-official source for information on homeschooling, which would, in turn, minimize the effectiveness of homeschool groups and individual advocates. Homeschooling has thrived for decades without government assistance. Maryland already has some of the best homeschool regulations in the country and we represent ourselves wonderfully and passionately. An abundance of innovative, privately funded, and often volunteer-run organizations currently study and meet the needs of the homeschooling community. Homeschooling families can freely choose which of these organizations to work with. Thus, an official advisory council would likely do more harm than good in the future.

I am concerned that 4/16 members of this proposed council would be appointed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. At present, these individuals are, at the very least, not familiar with homeschool or the needs of the Maryland homeschooling community nor the wants. Politically, Maryland's 70% super-majority are public school advocates and in that, each child not part of the public system is seen as lost revenue. Therefore, I fail to see the incentive they will have to improve homeschooling. A limited bureaucratic council wouldn't accurately represent the diverse Maryland homeschool community.

Again, while this legislation may be well intentioned, the reality of it is extremely concerning. We are fine, we like things the way they are, we are not asking for government-funded services.

Thank you for your time, Jacquelin Zubko-Cunha