

A lot of wisdom can be gained by looking to nature for guidance. Trees for example have been proven to look after their seedlings in the forest. Tree "parents" make sure that their saplings grow slowly, so that the wood of their offspring is dense, strong and supple. This makes a strong forest. In the same way, we parent our kids to make sure that they mature slowly, that they are not faced with decisions that they are not meant to handle. A community of supported parents is a strong community, with healthy children who, in their turn and at the right time, can assume all of the responsibilities of adulthood.

Parents know and love their children and are the ones best suited to make decisions for their children. No one would claim that a young bear would know best how to decide what to do. It is natural, instinctual, and right that parents be given the protection to lead their families as their traditions guide them. Each family is unique and has its own traditions. The diversity of parenting styles and cultures needs to be honored and strengthened.

Even the Supreme Court has seen fit to rule in 1979 that "Most children, even in adolescence, simply are not able to make sound judgments concerning many decisions, including their need for medical care or treatment. Parents can and must make those judgments." Please be guided by that wisdom and act today to strengthen parental rights. For if we are not free to fulfill our most sacred duty, I ask you, how can we call ourselves free?

I ask you to stand for parents, to stand for strong families, and to vote to support H.B. 1242

Thank you  
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Additional testimony from 14-year-old:

I completely support this bill. It is so crucial to maintain the parent child relationship. Parents are not just there to make meals drive and buy bills. Their job is to guide their children and make decisions for them until their children are old enough and wise enough to make those decisions for themselves. I think that this is right and just.

Parents are role models for their kids, and show them how to make their way as thoughtful considerate adults. Parents will not be able to do this or be the role model for their children if children are expected to make decisions for themselves.

There is a reason that there is a coming of age. Under the age 18, you are still a child, and for a very good natural reasons, parents need to be the ones in charge. They alone care about their children and look out for what is best for them in a way that no one else can. Thank you for this bill. I pray that it passes.

Alaya Zsebenyi age 13 (I'll be 14 very soon and still need my parents help)

My name is Zoe Zsebenyi, and I am a homeschooling 11th grader from Catonsville. I strongly support this bill. All kind, loving parents should always be able to make the final decision regarding their children's upbringing, education, and welfare, as my parents have done for me these past 17 years. Although I also research things independently, I still rely on them to know what's best for me. The passing of this bill would help to insure that they can always make those choices, both for me and for my three younger siblings. What kind of a world would we live in if parents were not able to choose how their kids got their education, or what kind of food was the healthiest for them to eat? Parents should always have the right to decide between school and homeschooling for their kids, and to choose what they think is best to feed them, whether they choose organics or keto or vegan, or all of the above. I am so happy that my parents were free to make those decisions, and many others, for me and my siblings, and I am confident that they will always be able to do so with the help of this bill. Please support HB1242!

Thank you,  
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