

Written Testimony for HB 1043

Jennie Carr

My children have been playing soccer with the county (SCYA) for the past 3.5 years. One of the most disappointing aspects of homeschoolers being denied access to high school sports is the separation from their friends. Last year, after starting high school, we moved my older son to another recreational league because all his usual teammates had transitioned to playing for their public high school. This year, we decided to enroll him in a private club league. The club league is expensive, and we were shocked to find that they did not prioritize scheduling fall games, as they chose to accommodate the many players who also participated in their high school teams. Even in a club league, where we are paying for access, the focus is still on public high school players.

My daughter is currently in eighth grade and has played on the same team with nearly all of the same girls every fall and spring. This spring will be the last time she gets to play with them, as they are all moving on to public high school sports. It is heartbreaking to see my children separated from the friends they have bonded with over the years. Even more frustrating is that they are denied a chance to join the same team. This is not a level playing field and is completely unfair.

If high schoolers have to try out for the team, then why can't homeschoolers have the same opportunity? They should at least be given a chance. Just because we choose not to use the system that we fund with our tax dollars for education does not mean we should be denied the choice to participate in the same recreational sports teams that we also fund. I'm not asking for guaranteed spots on the team for homeschoolers; I'm only asking for a level playing field by offering tryouts for everyone. Furthermore, if tryouts are approved in the future, it should be kept confidential who is homeschooled and who is enrolled in public school to prevent discrimination.