

To: The House Education Policy Committee

From: Mark and Cherie Loar

Re: MN House DE Amendment (Education Policy Omnibus Bill)

Date: March 9, 2021

We are a home educating family from Hennepin County, MN. We are strongly opposed to certain language in this bill. We have home educated our 5 children in Minnesota for over 20 years and are concerned that this ongoing choice for many families will be hindered by this bill.

The bill language which states/implies that "proof of prior testing" and a "copy of test scores" will be added as new requirements for home educators. After years of positive home education experience in this state, we are unclear why such a requirement is being reintroduced.

This reporting requirement is contrary to the 2011 Homeschool Mandate Reduction bill which simplified the requirements for MN homeschoolers. Years ago, this was considered as a MN requirement for home educators but the school districts themselves decided that the administrative work to do this was not worth their time. What credible evidence among home educated students in MN would now make this requirement important?

This would be a significant step backward for homeschooling freedom in Minnesota. It would impose unnecessary and burdensome requirements on Minnesota homeschoolers and districts. And, it could provide government officials or other agents with the unconstitutional authority to see private data. Parents should be the ones who decide how their children are educated.

Respectfully,

*Mark and Cherie Loar*

P.S This is the second time in one week in which we believe that our freedom and parental rights to home educate are being challenged by this committee. During yesterday's hearing of HF 874, (a revision to the MN State Constitution regarding education) we were assured by authors and supporters that this amendment indeed was NOT an attempt to bring MN Home Educators under the control of the state of MN. However, this additional action seems to validate our concerns! We strongly disagree with this potential infringement on our parental rights.