

Members of the **House Education Policy Committee**, I am Melissa Hoffman, and I am writing in opposition of HF874, and I ask you to reject this bill. The wording used in this bill is concerning and could lead to citizens losing the right to choose the best means of education for their children. HF874 says: "All children have a fundamental right to a quality public education that fully prepares them with the skills necessary for participation in the economy, our democracy, and society, as measured against uniform achievement standards set forth by the state. It is a paramount duty of the state to ensure quality public schools that fulfill this fundamental right." The state cannot make the best choices for children. Parental rights must be protected. Parents love their children, know their children best, and will make the best choices for them. The form of education which is best for a child should be decided by the parents. The option of parents to choose the means of education; whether public, private, or home education, needs to be protected. I am especially concerned with preserving the right to home educate, as we home educate our children. I want to emphasize again, the right for parents to choose how their children are educated and where their children get their education needs to be preserved.

I would also like to mention that the government's choice to send children home during COVID to continue their public education from home, should in no way be compared to home education. Parents, teachers, and children were rushed into many changes with no time to prepare. The failures that came about through this circumstance are completely unrelated to home education.

I also want to reference the Testimony for Minnesota Senate E-12 Finance and Policy Committee from: David M. Watkins, former Executive Director of Minnesota Association of Christian Home Educators, date Friday, March 6, 2020. Mr. Watkins gives much insight on the problems which could arise if this amendment is not rejected. I fully agree with his testimony. Please reference his testimony. I ask you again, please reject this proposed amendment to the Minnesota Constitution.

Melissa Hoffman, home educator

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