

To: House Education Policy Committee
From: Mr. William Havyer, MBA and Dr. Rachel D. Havyer, M.D.
RE: MN House DE Amendment (Education Policy Omnibus Bill)
Date: March 9, 2021

Dear House Education Policy Committee Members,

We understand that a current proposal to change test reporting requirements for homeschoolers is included within the MN House DE Amendment (Education Policy Omnibus Bill). We believe this is an added burden on homeschooling parents, as well as local education administrations, especially in the light of the complexities of today's learning environments.

We do not understand the purpose of this change in policy.

As we understand, homeschoolers make the best of the freedom that teaching at home provides. Our children benefit from the focused attention, the flexibility in travel and the higher learning levels of our older children, which positively influences our youngers. Our family life is filled with learning as we have chosen to teach in the field, where we have studied America's history and our Government in Washington DC with tours of the White House, United States Capital, Library of Congress and Smithsonian Museums, to name a few, as well as learning how we are personally connected to history by taking our oldest child into the National Archives Research Areas to review original documents of historical figures in our family's own history. We also learn together the cultural diversity the world has to offer by visiting our Hispanic family in Mexico and frequenting museums, cultural centers and establishments of all peoples and from all walks of life in the most urban environments and to the most rural countrysides. As a family, we have walked the footsteps of historical figures in our National Parks from George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Harriett Tubman, Frederick Douglas and Martin Luther King, Jr., again just to name a few. We've walked through many state capitals and studied local cultures from some of the most obscure small community historical societies and also within diverse communities such as Chicago's Chinatown, Hawaii's diverse Asian communities, New Orleans Jazz culture to the obscure crawdad feeds in Mississippi, the side of the road Indian frybread stands in Arizona's Navajo nation and sacred sites of Indigenous Peoples from Cahokia, Effigy and Hopewell Mound sites to Tuzigoot, Pipestone and Wipatki National Monuments, along with many other cultural sites. We have spent entire days, and sometimes more, at some of the best science, art, music, culture and history museums in the United States and with the exception of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, we have seen much of what our country has to offer from the other states. Our family goal is that, before our children leave home for their advanced education, they will have experienced much of what each of the 50 United States has to offer and experience life in our neighboring countries of Mexico and Canada.

In addition, we are part of the Classical Conversations education program, which focuses our learning strategies on the Classical Model of education teaching from the trivium. As our oldest moves into the dialectic stage, we have observed that our children have a very strong foundation, and a vast array of information and experiences, to move them deeper in their education. In addition to these experiences, our children are learning the grammar of English, Latin, Spanish, Math, History, Science, Art and Music. My wife and I seek to provide our children with the best education possible and choosing to learn as a family has encouraged each of us to learn beyond our focus of study.

As you can see by this quick look into our family life, we take education very seriously and stretch ourselves to learn beyond our past experiences and knowledge. To make that happen, our time is very limited and valuable. The current reporting requirements of the 2011 Homeschool Mandate Reduction bill is adequate as it stands and any change would create additional undo barriers, as well as add a level of authority in a space where we as parents explore how best our children learn and then provide a learning environment to help them meet their full potential.

Therefore, we oppose the proposed changes in the MN House DE Amendment (Education Policy Omnibus Bill).

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter,

William Havyer, MBA and Rachel D. Havyer, M.D.
Rochester, MN