

March 5, 2021

RE: HF874 - Fundamental right to quality public education for all children provided, and constitutional amendment proposed.

Ms. Taken-Holtze,

Please include this written testimony in the virtual committee packet for the Information Hearing on HF874.

My name is Dan Osterberg and my wife, Heidi, and I are parents to three school-aged children. We currently live in Brooklyn Park, MN where we homeschool all three children.

We haven't always homeschooled our children; in fact, our oldest child attended kindergarten at a public school in the White Bear School District. The school was highly rated and his teacher was top notch - we could not have asked for a better public school situation. However, my wife volunteered regularly in the classroom, and she observed the troubling pattern that the teacher spent much of her time focused on a small handful of kids that were either disruptive to the class or falling behind in their progress. Rarely did she have time to "push" a student, such as our child, who was ready to be challenged.

My wife had many conversations with the teacher and together they began to discuss the possibility that our child may have a better education experience in a homeschool environment.

We decided to try homeschooling the following year, and are now approaching the end of our seventh year of homeschooling. Schooling is going exceedingly well - all of our children regularly test 3-4 grade levels ahead on their annual standardized tests.

At the end of each school year, we discuss how the previous year went and what the plan will be for the following year. We discuss all aspects of development, including intellectual, emotional, social, etc. As parents, we know our children best, and are in the best position to evaluate their development. We are in the best position to determine what is best for them.

For this reason, I strongly oppose HF874. As a parent, it should be my right to determine what defines a quality education for my children. HF874 takes that right from me and places that judgement in the hands of the courts or other appointed persons who do not have any personal connection to my children. I hope you will support my right to determine the best educational path for my children by rejecting HF874.

Sincerely,

Dan Osterberg