



Home School Legal Defense Association

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December 13, 2022

Dear Chair Manning, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Committee:

My name is Amy Buchmeyer, and I am a Staff Attorney at the Home School Legal Defense Association. HSLDA is a national public interest nonprofit with over 100,000 member families, including over 4,500 member families in Ohio. Our heartbeat is making homeschooling possible. We offer caring support for every stage of a family’s homeschool journey—from personalized legal advice and educational consulting to practical resources and even financial hardship grants. As part of our services, we help families navigate Ohio’s homeschool regulations.

On behalf of our members, HSLDA opposes SB 178 as it is currently written.

Homeschool families are deeply concerned because this bill will reduce our ability to effectively engage with our governing regulations. Ohio’s existing regulations make it one of the most burdensome states in which to homeschool, and as a result, our families actively engage with the board of education on a regular basis.

Over the years, various parties have proposed more onerous requirements for homeschool families, but we have been able to work with the state board to improve the regulations without adding unnecessary regulatory burdens.

However, under this proposed system, the unelected director would serve the governor’s agenda, not the voters and certainly not the homeschoolers. While we appreciate Ohio’s current governor and his support for homeschooling, we consider the future. If a less pro-homeschooling governor takes office, this barrier from public accountability stands to cause significant harm.

Homeschool families should have a voice through the elected process. We would love to see statutes that better protect and support that voice. In fact, Ohio is one of the few states in the country that governs homeschooling almost exclusively through regulation and not law. There is significant room for improvement, so we are glad to see these discussions taking place.

However, without further security for homeschoolers, we urge you to vote no on this bill.

