

From: Melanie Hunt

To: The Public Health Policy Committee, State of Ohio

Date: June 24, 2024

Re: HB 602

Chairman Mathews, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Public Health Policy Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony for HB 602; the “Exempt home education groups from child care, zoning regulations act.” The language in this bill, as introduced, simply clarifies that a home education learning pod functions much differently and serves a purpose different than a daycare.

As a homeschool parent for the last 15+ years, I have used many different resources, subject matter experts, and settings to educate my children. Every year I submit a statement to my local superintendent’s office assuring that I am satisfying all parts of the Ohio Revised Code for home education and that I direct said education. For many homeschool parents, home education learning pods help accomplish this by serving as a setting for group instruction, peer modeling, and social opportunities. Parents who choose to use these settings do so with full intentionality for the express purpose of educating their children.

Simply put: this is not child care. The purpose and function of these groups is for education.

I also humbly suggest adding language that includes the term “homeschool co-op” to this list. Co-op is a very commonly used term in homeschool settings and is short for cooperative. Typically, a homeschool co-op is a group of parents of homeschool children who gather and teach various subjects or provide unique learning experiences for the children.

I appeal to you, members of our Public Health Policy Committee, to protect Ohioan’s right to assemble freely with our homeschool children for the express purpose of education. I urge this committee to please vote yes on HB 602, the “Exempt home education groups from child care, zoning regulations act”.