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Senate Education Committee  
Oregon State Legislature  
Re: OPPOSE HB3624 ESD Testing for Homeschoolers

Dear Senators,

As a homeschooling parent of 22 years, I am asking that you oppose HB 3624, which proposes to provide funding for homeschool students to meet their state testing requirements through public schools. This bill is 1) unnecessary and 2) encroaching on the rights of private homeschool families in Oregon.

This is unnecessary because 1) public schools are generally accommodating currently of local homeschoolers joining their testing days; 2) families utilizing virtual charters already have their standardized testing provided for; and 3) families who don't use charters prefer to maintain their independence and privacy, by not exposing their children to public school staff scrutiny.

This encroaches on the rights of homeschooling families. Oregon homeschool parents do not have to adhere to any state suggestions and can select their own curriculum and instructional materials. The state does not have required subjects, record keeping, minimum instruction hours, or minimum parental education requirements. The requirement to conduct testing in 3rd, 5th, 8th, and 10th grade does not require that parents submit results, just that they do the tests. If homeschool families choose a curriculum that differs from public schools, they will need a different variety of assessments to fairly evaluate their students' progress. If a student were assessed on the public school curriculum, after learning from a different curriculum, that student and the student's parents could then stand to be unfairly scrutinized.

As a parent, about 7 years ago, I was looking for resources for a child with learning challenges. After being assessed by a public school resource specialist, I was told that my child was "bright, but hasn't been taught anything." We thanked the specialist for her time and pursued our own interventions. As a parent, I know my child better than any test ever will. As a homeschool parent, I am with him 7 days a week. No one is as invested in their child and that child's best interest as the parent who homeschools.

There are ways that testing can be made more accessible and available for homeschooling families. The state requirements for testing proctors and moderators are stringent and difficult, reducing the number of available testers over the last several years. Reducing these requirements could make more proctors available. Additionally, you could allow for online test options. Many online standardized testing options are available, but it does not fulfill the Oregon homeschool testing requirement. The final alternative would be to eliminate the testing requirement. We can see that standardized testing is not a good measure of a student's success.

As a homeschool family, I do not want to see my neighbor's tax dollars going to the failing public schools in the name of "helping homeschoolers." We don't want this kind of help, it will only serve to injure homeschooling in Oregon in the long run.

Please OPPOSE HB 3624.

I am available and happy to discuss this further. (503) 430-2120

Sincerely,

Sarah Vertner  
Homeschooling Mom of 6  
22-year Homeschool Veteran  
Leader in the Homeschool Community  
Assisted Homeschooling Communities throughout the  
Portland Area and the Northern Oregon Coast.