

Good morning. My name is Amanda Weeden. I'm a Home Education Advocate in the state of New Hampshire, a leader in Granite State Home Educators and Christian Home Educators of New Hampshire and Southern Maine.

HEAC or Home Education Advisory Council is an advisory council to the commissioner. And for the last 15, plus years, that I've been doing this, it has largely flown under the radar except for a handful of dust-ups. The mission purpose and function is entirely and solely related to the Home Education pathway.

So as a means of transparency, I'd like to enter into the record, what this surprise non-germain amendment is really about.

Since last September appointed members of HEAC, Advocates and Home Educators have consistently and with increasing alarm gone through the proper channels of HEAC to call the Commissioner's attention to serious issues. Additionally, and progressively they added meetings to their schedule, myself and many community members emailed and spoke out publicly with increasing frustration to be met with unprofessional behavior and our concerns were repeatedly minimized or flat out ignored.

There's a lengthy paper trail pointing to the dedication of many Home Educators to advocate for our uncompromised voice across all platforms and discussions. And in fact, we're here today adding to that paper trail. We will not be silenced. We will not sit down and shut up.

Our long and impressive history of fighting to be left alone is at the heart of this hearing. The school choice movement in the last four years is late to the party. Home Educators are the original "School Choicers" and should enjoy the same level of advocacy, protection, diligence and attention by the Commissioner and Legislators as the three other Pathways.

Having served on HEAC as a member and co-chair, and been consistently ignored (as a volunteer mind you) I don't necessarily care if HEAC is repealed. What I do care about is the transparency of how and why this non-germaine Amendment was added at the last minute, with no discussion at all with HEAC members.

No one, just to be clear. No one even the sitting members on HEAC, one of whom is the sponsor of this bill notified members or our community that this repeal was on the table. This amendment is punitive and in response to our community defining and protecting home education in New Hampshire. Home Education in New Hampshire is worth protection, and the optics of this, non-germane amendment being added at the last minute are bad. It's a bad look for the outgoing Commissioner and Republican legislators.

If this repeal goes through, so be it. The red tape alone makes HEAC untenable. And the Home Education community will create something new, free from the constraints of the selective attention given to us by the Commissioner.

It's my hope as a leader in the community that we replace this political theater with true collaboration and proceed with the common goal of supporting Home Education as a separate and distinct educational option.