June 4, 2019

Gentlemen and ladies:

Thank you for hosting this hearing on the age of compulsory attendance. I would like to give you a few bullet points on the issue:

- **People do not know that the compulsory attendance age is currently 8.** They WILL know if this becomes law and you publicize what it has been. Right now nearly all citizens of the Commonwealth believe that the compulsory attendance age is 5 and that parents need special permission to hold kids at home until 6. I know because I was one of those parents who believed this and have spoken to many, many others as well.
- **Many parents who do not homeschool can’t wait for a school day to not have to deal with their children so they do not hold their children at home until 8.**
- **Homeschoolers do not want to be the “exceptions”.** We see this as beneficial to all students.
- **No news media is reporting 6- and 7-year-olds as having issues.**
- **No police reports are publicized as having 6- and 7-year-olds causing problems.**
- **If “educational neglect” is occurring, that is not an education issue. It’s a parenting issue.**
- **Because 6- and 7-year-olds have such a basic education, homeschoolers shouldn’t have to do evaluations for these children.** We pay for all of our academic materials, activities, standardized testing in 3rd, 5th, and 8th grade, and evaluations every year. There is no need to add to the cost or cause stress to 6- and 7-year-olds.
- **There are some children who will go to school but aren’t ready for the classroom atmosphere at age 5, 6, or 7.** They can get educated at home and then get into the classroom in a delayed, more appropriate time without feeling like they are pressured to be in school already. This can help a child to be successful when they do enter a classroom which can cause so much social, academic, or other failure in such sensitive ages.
- **Sick children can build their immune system and heal better without the additional stress on them and their parents.**
- **Not all parents want to homeschool, but with compulsory attendance being 8, that gives parents more time to assess their child’s emotional, social, academic, medical, and other readiness before having to make a decision to put the child in school and risk unnecessary stress and other issues.**
- **These numbers are so very small, but nothing is broken. Nothing will be fixed by this change.**

Homeschoolers as a whole have opposed this change for decades.

I thank you for your consideration and urge you to oppose lowering the compulsory attendance age. Please feel free to contact me for further questions.

Ellen Kramer
Co-founder
Catholic Homeschoolers of Pennsylvania