

HCS HB 31 -- HOME-BASED EDUCATION PROTECTIONS

SPONSOR: Davidson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 13 to 3 with 3 Present. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 6 to 3.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 31.

This bill repeals current law that allows parents to provide a written declaration of enrollment for home school children to the county recorder of deeds and requires schools to drop from the school rolls any student whose parent provides written notice that they are no longer going to attend public school, specified in the bill.

Currently, home school and family paced education (FPE) education enforcement and records are subject to review only by the prosecuting attorney. This bill requires the prosecuting attorney to have probable cause to review the records.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that school districts often use the voluntary requirement for notice to force parents to submit evidence or documentation on where their student is going or why they are leaving the public school. Schools will make students sign a declaration of home school enrollment and then report the students for educational neglect. There is no need for a mandatory letter or an annual update.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Davidson; Home School Legal Defense Association; Family Covenant Ministries; Families For Home Education, Inc.; and Mavis Dey.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say schools should have some authority to require a statement from parents. The prosecuting attorney should also be able to take complaints and ensure that there is no violation of the law for educational neglect.

Testifying in person on the bill was Arnie C. Dienoff.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.