

# Homeschoolers Respond to New Jersey Assembly Bill: A1918

## **Why do you object to this bill (A1918)? It seems reasonable enough.**

- A1918 requires both annual medical exams and annual assessment tests that no other state in the USA requires.
- A1918 violates Federal law. The No Child Left Behind Act specifically excludes homeschoolers.
- A1918 is legislation about which all parents should be concerned.
- We have been successfully homeschooling for many years in N.J.. There is no sudden or demonstrated need for change.

## **Why should all New Jersey citizens oppose A1918?**

- Under A1918, all N.J. property owners would pay higher taxes.
- A1918 directly attacks parents' rights to direct the education of their children. It opens the door to attacks on other parents' rights.
- A1918 falsely insinuates that homeschoolers must be monitored. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that parents must be assumed to be acting in the best interest of their children unless clear, contrary evidence exists.
- The U.S. Supreme Court wrote, "The Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the fundamental right of parents to make decisions concerning the care, custody and control of their children." A1918 usurps this right and gives it to the State.

## **Do you test your children?**

- Homeschooled children statistically test higher than their public or private school counterparts on standardized tests (such as the SAT and ACT).
- Testing serves to report back to parents who have delegated their responsibility to educate their children to the state. Homeschoolers have not delegated that responsibility to the state.

## **What is wrong with requiring homeschoolers to take public school tests?**

- Standardized tests were designed to test public school curricula. Homeschoolers use a myriad of highly effective educational methods and tools tailored to each child.
- There are no standardized tests that would fit homeschoolers.
- The state needs to test their students to provide evidence of their effectiveness to taxpayers and parents who choose public schools.

## **Why not mandate medical exams? My neighbor's kids have to take a medical exam every year to go to school.**

- N.J. law does not mandate annual medical exams for public or private school students.
- For insurance reasons, some public/private school students are required to have medical exam to certify they are not at a health risk to participate in elective sports.

## **Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg, A1918's sponsor, says that New Jersey is one of only 9 states that does not regulate homeschoolers. Shouldn't New Jersey mimic the 41 states that do regulate homeschooling?**

- This number is misleading. Close to half the states have either no or minimal regulation, and that percentage is growing.
- The trend in the US is for states to loosen or remove homeschool regulation. Regulations enacted with the thought of improving home education have proven unnecessary and very costly.
- Research shows no difference in the academic outcomes among homeschoolers in regulated vs. unregulated states.
- A1918 and high regulation waste taxpayer money.
- A1918 and high regulation waste time better suited to education.

## **What if there is one homeschooled child out there who is not being educated, or even worse, may be abused?**

- What about the hundreds of thousands of pre-school aged children in N.J. who may be neglected or abused?
- There are already laws in place in N.J. to protect ALL children from neglect and abuse.
- It is wrong to single out homeschoolers. They have not shown themselves to be more likely to be child abusers than any other parents.

**What changes or amendments in the bill would make it acceptable?**

- There are **NO** changes or amendments to this bill that would make it acceptable. The current law under which N.J. parents homeschool has been working well for 40 years, and as of yet, there has been no evidence that any change is needed.

**Shouldn't there be some standards/oversight of homeschoolers?**

- The current law under which N.J. parents homeschool has been working well for 40 years. There is no sudden need for new laws to fix it.
- Statistical data shows that children educated by their parents do better on every measure – academically, socially, and even living happier lives as adults.
- Research shows no difference in the academic outcomes among homeschoolers in regulated vs. unregulated states.

**If a homeschooled child is not well educated, could there be a future taxpayer cost? Doesn't this possibility give the state a vested interest?**

- The public school system produces such "costs to society" each and every year and in greater numbers than homeschoolers could possibly produce. The biggest cost to benefit ratio is to direct attention to the public school system.
- There is no perfect educational system, as there is no perfect child. Statistics prove that homeschooling produces more successful results than other systems.

**Why do homeschoolers think A1918 was introduced in 2004?**

- We believe it was an intellectually dishonest response to the sensational child neglect allegations directed against the Jackson family in Collingswood, N.J., in the fall of 2003. The allegations against the Jacksons are grievous. The Jacksons were homeschoolers. There is no valid logical connection between these two facts. The Jacksons are also English speaking, over thirty and African American. It would be equally absurd to associate any of these characteristics to child neglect and abuse – and then legislate using such profiling.
- Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg is the Committee Chairwoman of the N.J. Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services. The New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) suffers massive problems, many outlined in the N.J. Child Advocate's report on the Jackson allegations. Not the least of the problems was that DYFS visited the Jackson family 38 times over the past years.

It is the opinion of home educators that it is not home education that needs fixing. Instead, the N.J. State Legislature, as responsible, elected representatives of their constituents, must correct its costly and failing public schools and DYFS.

**Education Network of Christian Home Educators (ENOCH of N.J.)**

Ray Stoeve, President  
Box 308, Atlantic Highlands, N.J. 07716-0308  
732-291-7800  
President@enochnj.org  
Mark August, Legislative Liaison  
78 Skeet Road, Medford, N.J. 08055  
609-953-2145  
legislative\_liaison@enochnj.org  
www.enochnj.org

**Unschoolers Network**

Nancy Plent, President  
2 Smith Street, Farmingdale, N.J. 07727  
732-938-2473  
UnNet@aol.com

**New Jersey Homeschool Association (N.J.HA)**

Tim Haas, President  
P.O. Box 1386, Medford, N.J. 08055  
856-546-2813  
jerseyhome@yahoo.com  
www.geocities.com/jerseyhome

**Catholic Homeschoolers of New Jersey (CHN.J.)**

Diane Toler, Director  
Christopher Brennan, Esq.  
1020 Cardinal Lane, Cherry Hill, N.J. 08003  
856-429-4893  
chN.J.@chnj.org  
www.chnj.org

**Eagle Forum of New Jersey**

Carolee Adams, President  
Box 205, Park Ridge, N.J. 07656  
201-391-1737  
EagleForumNJ@juno.com  
www.eagleforum.org