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Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am submitting my written testimony in support of SB826. I was planning on being at the hearing in person today; however, one of my children became ill so I am not able to attend in person.

I am an engaged parent of three boys enrolled in high school/magnet school, junior high school and elementary school. I support Senate Bill 826 because Michigan's public school children deserve to have the best education possible with local control. If Michigan is to become a Top 10 education state in 10 years we need to pass this bill. Michigan's, college and career ready agenda, which is pushed by corporations and test providers subjects our children to developmentally inappropriate standards, extreme testing & data collection and uses our tax dollars irresponsibly.

As a third generation of immigrants, I am the first person in my family to earn a college degree. Education is extremely important to me. My education gave me the opportunity escape poverty. I am here today to put my full support behind SB826 so our children never have to carry the burden of poverty because they didn't have access to an excellent education.

In September 2014, my youngest son was starting 3rd grade and it was the first year CCSS ELA & Math standards were rolled out into our schools, very quietly. I can't even explain how that made me feel, an engaged parent, hearing about Common Core for the first time.

As a veteran parent with two older sons, I was very confident that my bright 3rd grader would also have a wonderful year and excel in his academics; however, there were some very noticeable differences between his CCSS education and my older sons' education that made me deeply concerned with the CCSS.

Observations from a veteran third grade parent.

Where are all the books? He only had a Social Studies book. Notebooks were created for all of his other subjects. His math notebook was a compilation of cut & pasted worksheets and hand written notes so he had some reference material to study from. I would have liked to show it to you in person today. In lieu of textbooks, he was directed to many on-line websites to learn and study from. We have plenty of access to technology at home; however, I do not want my child learning in front of a screen.

Studies show we should be reducing screen time for our children, not increasing it. How are all the children living in poverty expected to perform at home via technology based education that CCSS has leaned towards?

Why is my son multiplying with circles and dots? One afternoon, we were engaged in a competitive family game of Yahtzee and I was appalled when he couldn't multiply basic facts in his head. Instead, he holds up the game, flips over his score card and begins to write groups of circles and dots representing the amount of numbers on the dice and proceeds to *count* them. This is one of the multiplication methods a child learns under Common Core. It is not efficient.

Why does the multiplication table only go up to the 9s? The CCSS Math Content 3.OA.C.7 standard requires children to fluently multiply and divide within 100 not 144. They need to know from memory all products of two *one-digit numbers*. This dumbed down example of a math concept is reinforced & proven via the M-Step multiplication table which only goes up to 9's. A teacher can choose to teach up to the 12s; however, all software programs are aligned with CCSS and doesn't include 10, 11 or 12s in their applications. Trust me, I contacted the software developer over my concern. So if a school chooses to support multiplication facts with an app or through other technology, the students never receive multiplication reinforcement above 9s. The bottom line is that my bright, straight A son, did not fluently know his multiplication and division facts by the end of 3rd grade as the CCSS required.

Where did all this testing come from? After much research into the history of the M-Step, its ability to collect psychometric data, understanding what a computer adaptive test is and the reason it is used, the secrecy of the test, the amount of hours devoted to standardized testing, we decided that this wasn't acceptable for our son to participate in. Who decides that it is acceptable for an 8-year-old to type efficiently on a computer let alone take timed, developmentally inappropriate, computer standardized tests? This is not developmentally appropriate.

Why does an assignment appear to be a math story problem but it turns out it is really an ELA close and critical reading passage? It just confuses and tricks students (and parents). Is this how we are going to become a Top 10 education state?

Observations from a veteran third grade parent.

We were in an excellent school, with the same amazing educators yet assignment after assignment left me questioning what happened to the great education that my other sons received? I could go on and on about my older children's experiences; however, I think I've illustrated that the standards are flawed and if young students do not have a great foundation, we will lose an entire generation of children. I fear what the STEM fields will become if we continue on the current CCSS path.

My husband and I were so distraught over it that we pulled our youngest child from public school and enrolled him in a private school. I couldn't sit by and watch these horrible standards executed as my child was dumbed down. CCSS has financially affected my family's livelihood. I've also had to adjust my work schedule to accommodate taking my son to and from private school every day. There is not one single day that CCSS does not negatively affect my family.

Parents all over Michigan are upset over what has happened in their children's education and parents with young children are not planning on enrolling their children in schools that are associated with CCSS or any like standards. Some parents are even going to extremes by relocating to states that do not have CCSS. That is why it is imperative that we pass SB826. We want local control of our schools and we want Michigan to be a leader in education excellence!

The only way our politicians can truly understand what is happening in the school house is to listen to what parents are communicating about their children's experiences. I look forward to supporting politicians that publicly oppose Common Core State Standards, the data collection and standardized testing that has narrowed our curriculum.

Thank you for allowing a hearing on this very important bill. I urge you to stand with parents and constituents over special interests and support SB826. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Danielle Barrette