SENATE EDUCATION
EXHIBIT NO. 23
DATE 2-14-05
BILL NO. SB-291

SB 291 - Personal Testimony
Ann Bitz
Big Sandy, MT

I am a high school graduate (12 years), a college graduate (4 years), a home economics teacher (7 years), and a parent of a child who attended public school for two years. That puts me at about 25 years of being involved with the public school system. During that time I met and worked with many wonderful teachers. I also met and worked with some teachers who should not have been teaching. In those 25 years of involvement, I never once saw a school revise it's teacher educational requirements or shut down because it had a poor teacher. I never once saw a school take drastic measures to revamp the whole system or implement more testing because of a poor teacher. When I think about the number of students a poor teacher in the public school system might influence, the numbers can be staggering. In a small rural system if a teacher taught for 25 years he/she probably worked with a minimum of 75 students. In a larger system the potential is in the thousands. What an incredible amount of influence a poor teacher can exert in the public school system.

In every system, be it schools, business, industry, etc. there are always a few who don't enhance the program. I'm sure there are a few home educators like that as well. What is their sphere of influence - one, two, six, eight children?? Certainly not like the public schools. No one wants a child to not get a good education - public, private, or home. But we don't go in and legislate more rules for the public schools to follow, so let's not do that to the home schools. We need to work within the laws currently on the books. When a system is working, we don't just throw it out because of a few whether it be a public school or a home school.

Please vote NO to SB291

Sincerely,

Ann K. Bitz

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