To the Senate Bill Committee:

My name is Nathanael Kramer; I am a previously home-schooled student. I was educated by my parents from kindergarten on through high school. After turning 19, I began looking into taking the GED examination; planning to begin college, I enrolled in GED class there I remained for a little over two months. When I realized I was more than able to pass the exam; I took it and passed. A year later after passing the GED, I received top honors from my graduating class for exceptional scores in science. I began college, shortly after passing the GED; I attended full time with 12 credits for one semester, and received a 4.0 gpa for my first overall semester. Proudly, my name was put on the Flathead Valley Community College Dean's list. Sadly though, I caught walking pneumonia half way through the spring semester, and found it necessary to take a pause from college for a while. After taking the summer of 2004 off; I began Emergency Medical Technician Training. I am now one of the top students in my class (I am missing an EMT class to be here by the way).

The only reason I feel it necessary to talk about my success story, is because the reason I attained these achievements was because I was given the freedom to progress in my education at mine and my parents own discretion. I do not feel it necessary to have been as closely monitored as the Senate Bill 291 implies toward my kindergarten through 12 grade education.

I do not want to get into arguing the simple freedoms that this bill does not constitute, but it is forcefully requiring standardized testing for all students. Because all families are different, and all children are not the same, it is ridiculous to require them to progress at exactly the same pace as all other students in Montana. I would have been completely overwhelmed had I been required to take a test requiring me to "keep up" with everyone else. I was stubborn growing up and I did not like to learn anything until I was good and ready; I would not have let a standardized test tell me when I was ready or not. I ask is there something wrong with a student going at their own pace? Causing undue stress to a child in this manner cannot be healthy, and it infringes on a families rights and freedom to raise their own children according to how they see fit.

Both my parents home schooled my older sister. My father is not her biological father he is her step-father. This bill would not have allowed him to home school her, and it would not have let him educate all my siblings as a whole. My sister is just as successful as I am in our scholastic abilities; as a matter of fact, we both have somewhat of a rivalry in our abilities. It would not have been fair for either of us to have been separated due to a simple loop-hole or snare in this bill. I plan to home school my future family, when the time comes, and if I cannot because of reasons this bill implies I intend to move to another state where I am allowed to teach at my own discretion, thoughtfully implied. I implore you; please do not let this bill pass. It would cause undue stress on many such families as my own and many other families I know and love.

Respectfully
Nathanael Josiah Kramer

SENATE EDUCATION
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