

## **To the Members of the Maryland Department of Education:**

I am a Maryland resident writing in strong opposition to any changes to COMAR Title 13A that would impose mandatory standardized testing on homeschooled students.

The current system in Maryland already provides meaningful oversight through portfolio reviews and assessments conducted either by the local school system or a registered umbrella organization. COMAR 13A.10.01.01(E) makes clear that the purpose of these reviews is to determine whether a child is receiving "regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools." This standard is being met without mandatory testing.

Introducing standardized tests into this framework would undermine the flexibility and personalized nature of home education. Homeschooling is successful in part because it allows parents to tailor instruction to the unique strengths, needs, and pace of each child. Standardized tests, by design, reflect one-size-fits-all benchmarks that are often aligned to specific public school curricula—not to the diverse range of educational methods used by homeschoolers.

Moreover, *Mahmoud v. Taylor* (2025) reminds us that attempts to enforce uniform state education policies must be carefully constrained when they threaten to override family autonomy. Requiring homeschoolers to take standardized tests would signal a shift away from trust in parents and toward unnecessary state control—despite a lack of evidence that homeschooled students are underperforming. On the contrary, many go on to excel academically, socially, and professionally.

Mandatory testing would create additional cost, stress, and red tape for families without advancing educational quality. It would also place a burden on the state to administer, enforce, and monitor such a policy, diverting resources from more urgent educational needs.

I urge the Maryland State Department of Education to protect the rights of parents to educate their children without being subjected to burdensome or misaligned testing mandates. Please maintain the current, effective system and reject the addition of standardized testing requirements for homeschoolers.

Sincerely,

*A Concerned Maryland Citizen and Parent*