

Comment Report

Education

Date: 02/15/2024

Time: 01:00 PM

Location: RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult

Name: Debra Schwiesow

Comment: Please vote to oppose this amended bill. Giving control to the state is not a solution to the issues being highlighted by the out of state report. The decisions you are making will unnecessarily handicap rural school districts and decrease services currently provided by the AEAs. Please take the time to examine the issues, seek local input and think about the long term consequences of your decisions. Iowa voters are depending on you.

Name: Dawn Johnson

Comment: I am a registered Republican who is opposed to this bill. Please vote no. Rural school districts will be hurt the most. Please take the time necessary to examine the issues, seek local input and think about the long term consequences of your decisions. Iowa voters are depending on you. Once the decision is made, it cant be taken back.

Name: Melissa Melissa

Comment: First of all, thank you for the revisions to the original bill. Your work is much appreciated. And with that, I am OPPOSED to this bill because it doesn't create equal opportunities for Iowa's rural schools. Our rural schools are hurting due to decreased student enrollment and now if they have to pay for services for media and educational services, this will create more disparities for kids and schools in rural communities. Before a child can receive special education services, they need to receive an intervention in the Gen Ed setting to determine if the gap can close without intensive special education services. These interventions do not happen without trainin, coaching, and consulting from educational services. Without the ability to have access to these coaches and trainers to support schools in implementing these interventions, Iowa will see more kids identified for special education. This won't solve the problem of increasing outcomes for special education kids if the system is flooded with more kids and LESS teachers to teach them. Ask those if us in education and we will educate you on how this works if you're willing to listen. This bill is bad for rural schools and Iowa's kids!

Name: Brenda Dietiker

Comment: Vote NO. I vehemently oppose the AEA bill as it fails to prioritize the wellbeing and interests of teachers, students, and the broader community of Iowans. This legislation overlooks the essential role that education plays in shaping our future and neglects to address critical concerns within our educational system. By undermining the support and resources provided by the AEA, this bill threatens the quality of education and the livelihoods of educators across the state. It is imperative that lawmakers consider the longterm consequences and implications of this bill before making any decisions. I urge them to listen to the voices of educators, students, and concerned citizens and vote against this detrimental legislation. Our collective future depends on it. Iowa needs our strong AEA.

Name: Mindy Collins

Comment: Please vote no to this bill. Your inbox, forums, conversations, and calls have been filled with data showing a comprehensive review would be best before making this change. The negative impact for rural communities is huge. The loss of local control

takes us backwards. This bill does not in any way outline or show how any of these changes will improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Please listen to the people of Iowa and vote no. Thank you.

Name: Carol Hemesath

Comment: I oppose this bill. We live in rural Iowa. AEA is a necessary resource for our community. Why would you remove that? Iowans are NOT ASKING FOR THIS! Who are you representing with this bill? Do not vote for this bill. Iowa needs to demand Kim Reynolds put educators back into the department of education. Do not pass this bill.

Name: Nancy Cross

Comment: I hope you will vote no on this new amendment. Take time to study and discuss with all involved. I live close to Des Moines but the children living farther away will not be able to receive all or any help they need if everything is handled in Des Moines. They need the same help and consistency AEA PROVIDES. This needs to have everyone involved to be heard and then changes made where it is shortchanged. Nothing is perfect but change the part not to throw out the complete organization. Take this next year to listen to the parents teachers principals , etc. that keep this program running. Then suggest improvements. Let's keep Iowa schools first in the nation. We need to help ALL students. we have so many trained people on Iowa so let's have them supply the correct figures . Too much is at stake. Our children's future. Some of the professionals will never get to the rural or far off counties. Some of the students needing help are Brilliant or very smart and just need some help to be able to reach their highest level. Give out where this advice is coming from and which states are they from.

Name: Barb Nelson

Comment: I am opposed to this bill. Please undertake a study with Iowa stakeholders not relying on an out of state study when Iowa has a noncategorical special Ed system. Study the system to find out what needs to improve, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Name: Stacey Warren

Comment: Please Vote NO to this amended bill. There are still so many services that support all students that are not being accounted for in this wide sweeping impact to Iowas AEAs, Schools and students. Evidence based practices have been vetted and implemented in schools to support ALL students by the AEAs. The current bills do not take in account for all of the important services, practices and training that will be eliminated. These services such as critical incident response to support administrative teams, all staff and students when a death occurs of a school staff member or student. Schools need support during those very difficult times. They are directly impacted. National models support that having a trained team outside of the school is critical. Currently AEAs are the only teams trained in this model to support schools in Iowa. Mental Health protocol training for teams to support students, triage and support them being successful at school. This is high level suicide prevention based on the National Zero Suicide model. It is a systematic process for counselors, nurses, MH providers to support students during and after a budding MH crisis. It is a life saving system for students in schools. This impacts students with and without IEPs. Many students who experience MH concerns do not qualify for special education but need support from experts from the AEA who serve on building and district MH teams. When ALL students are served it helps support our students with the highest needs in special education. Professional development for educators by MH experts to train them to care for themselves and their students, trauma informed schools, Youth Mental Health First Aid etc. All of these services fall in a gap area in these bills. All of the expertise of AEA staff is lost with these proposed bills leaving ALL students under served and our most vulnerable students in danger. Please Vote NO and take time to see what will be lost. Account for the needs of ALL students,

rural schools and services that will be lost.

Name: Becky Nardy

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. Your inbox, forums, conversations, and calls have been filled with data showing a comprehensive review would be best before making this change. The negative impact for rural communities is huge. The loss of local control takes us backwards. This bill does not in any way outline or show how any of these changes will improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Please listen to the people of Iowa and vote no. Thank you.

Name: Kate Peterson

Comment: Vote NO to HSB 713. We the people asked for this bill and any amended form to be dropped. A comprehensive review involving all stakeholders is necessary when it comes to the special education system in Iowa. We have an amazing supportive system within the AEAs that provide so much more than what any of these bills are offering. It still jeopardizes every student's education. This is still being done way too fast and families are still being denied the opportunity to give input, in person.

Name: Julie Williams

Comment: Vote no to this bill. These amendments are keeping control in Des Moines and not providing equitable services for all Iowan students.. How is fee for service and using private services going to improve quality of education and be cost effective?? Listening to stakeholders is crucial and yet, these amendments do not address the concerns of Iowans. We need to take time to get this right pushing it through a legislative timeline in not an answer.

Name: Jodi Milner

Comment: Please support all AEA services. As a rural schoolteacher I cannot emphasize enough how much support we receive from AEAs. Literacy monitoring and data analysis to support all students. Math interventions and pinpointing deficits in knowledge so we can close the gap and move students forward. Then there is the social workers and their support in bridging community relations, teaching emotional regulation and supporting all students. I haven't even touched on resources they provide or hearing and vision screenings. We could not do all that we do for students in our rural district without them.

Name: Bridget Carberry Montgomery

Comment: I urge you not to pass this bill. The AEAs are too important to ALL of Iowa's children, both urban and rural. The services they provide allow schools to pool resources to utilize expensive databases, as well as the amazing support services that they provide to our teachers and students. Who will respond to the next crisis situation? An unknown bureaucrat from Des Moines, or a trained professional that already serves the school? Please don't change a system that is working!

Name: Rosemary Woody

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. AEA has been a huge part of our lives for the past 14 years. We adopted a safe haven baby with many special needs. She has received therapy her whole. Every thing she is able to do is because of the AEA, love and practice. I beg you just leave it alone. It might be broke in the governor's eyes but in the eyes of the people it is not broke so nothing needs fixed.

Name: Rachel Graham

Comment: Once again, I ask you to vote NO to the AEA bill. The amendments made to the original bill are not enough to make this bill worth anything. Changes can be made, but the process needs to slow down and all stakeholders should be at the table. If this bill is passed, there is no going back once it fails our students and our rural schools. They will be the ones to suffer the most. For all those that represent small

communities, this should be especially troubling and we should be looking at this and how it will harm our rural schools. Please reconsider and wait for something that will actually be appropriate for our students.

Name: Kelsey Baker

Comment: It's troubling to see the amended bill stripping local control from area education agencies, placing undue power in the hands of the Department of Education. The proposed fee-for-service model seems destined to disadvantage rural school districts, potentially leaving them as 'losers' in this scenario. We need solutions that involve input from our local experts and strive for bipartisan support. Our communities deserve better than policies that threaten their autonomy and wellbeing. Let's work together to ensure our education system reflects the needs and voices of Iowa stakeholders.

Name: Rebecca Carver

Comment: Please vote no. Provide the time for a comprehensive evaluation. Any AEA staff will tell you that they would never make such a high stakes decision that will impact students and families without a full and individual evaluation that would include multiple sources of reliable and valid data, interviews with all stakeholders and thoughtful consideration of the possible intended and unintended consequences of their decision. Please provide the AEAs the same level of rigor in their evaluation that they provide to Iowa children and families each and every day. Please vote no.

Name: Jean Conover

Comment: I understood at the meeting in Ida Grove with our representatives that this was going to be put on hold until all parties could discuss what actually needs to meet needs. Why is this being pushed into legislation? We need adjustments not total destruction

Name: Shelley Conover

Comment: Please vote NO once again!!! Let's slow the process down, bring all stakeholders to the "table" and complete the comprehensive review. It's that simple. This should have NEVER ended up in legislation.

Name: Kerri Schwemm

Comment: HSB713: lacks consistent funding, which will impact hiring and retaining highly qualified providers and negatively impacts quality, consistency and continuity of services reduces equity of services based on removal of funds does not take into account differentiated needs of individual districts shifts away from local control and collaboration does nothing that will substantially improve student improvement (how does shifting control to DE and moving positions to DE directly impact daily instruction????) The DE has lost credibility. They have struggled to plan and efficiently carry out a new statewide IEP system that has been in the works for 5 years. They have unilaterally chosen to eliminate a vital support to families in the Family and Educator Partner program. The Director is a political appointment and has no business having this much oversight with no accountability. This bill requires an AEA leader to have an educational license person the director of education at the state level should have some teaching experience as well! Create the task force; include stakeholders; listen to Iowans! I'm looking forward to November elections.

Name: Heather Haas

Comment: Please vote NO to this bill. The process is still showing the same as the initial bill. We cannot do this to our populations of students. Those that are in IEPs and those who are potentially going through the process. AEA staff support the right pathways for learning. They support professional development that is affordable for educators (not \$350 for 3 credits). It is unfortunate that some do not understand IEPs and what they are developed for as INDIVIDUALIZED plans. This bill is absurd and awful. There are districts trying to fill those roles that AEA do and they are filling them.

With people who are not educated and do not have the proper qualifications to do some of the work they are asked to do. It is unfortunate that this Bill has been allowed to continue to move on. This will be HORRIBLE for ALL students! You are completely hurting Iowas children by allowing this to move forward and progress.

Name: Brenna Ripp

Comment: I strongly urge you to oppose HSB 713 as it fails to remedy the flaws of the original bill. ALL students benefit from AEA services. A decision this crucial can not be made in haste. All stakeholders need to be at the table, as well as input Former directors of the Iowa Department of Education, who have all worked under Republican leadership, have expressed concerns with this bill. Listen to your constituents and slow the process. Thank you.

Name: Honore Pittenger

Comment: Please vote no to this. What you are doing if you vote yes is hurting this education system. Take the time to do your research as you will be making an issue for so many in our state.

Name: Sarah Esser

Comment: I strongly urge you to vote NO on HSB 713. I am a parent, a voter, and I have worked in education for 25 years and it just is so amazing to me that instead of taking the time to examine and review and determine what changes may be needed in a huge and effective system, Iowans have paid millions of dollars to a bill writer in a different state that has resulted in thousands of people potentially out of work, schools potentially without services that they are used to, and the loss of trust and services for families and children. I appreciate that the amendments and new bills have allowed for more time before ALL changes are made, but why does this need to be done through legislation? Why wouldn't we sit down and take the time to REALLY see what the long term outcomes of this would be before implementing and passing a bill into law? I strongly urge you to vote NO and create committees around the state to do things in a way that doesn't put fear into the entire education system of Iowa that has always been so great as it is. I also want to urge you to reconsider keeping the mental health social workers therapy services that are provided through the AEAs to districts and students that cannot afford or access them AND the Family Educator Partnership that has been so effective in providing a bridge between districts and families in tough situations. Our children, families, and educators need this to be done right, not done fast just to get it into law before the deadlines. Please vote NO!

Name: Jennifer Gilmore

Comment: This bill will hurt all Iowans. Please oppose.

Name: Denise Perez

Comment: Vote no to this bill and all amendments. The AEA provides a wide range of services to a variety of Iowans. It is obvious that not one of the stakeholders were consulted before the writing of this bill. If the goal is to improve AEAs then those impacted most should be at the table for these discussions.

Name: Elizabeth Elizabeth

Comment: Please vote no

Name: Jennifer Kingery

Comment: I appreciate that the House subcommittee did not support the initial version of HSB 542, and I vehemently urge you to stop and carefully consider the contents and ramifications of this current bill. It appears that the deadline has been more of a priority than the bill itself, as evidenced by the language of the bill. For example, there have not been 15 AEAs for years, but rather nine. That may be a simple

oversight, but it does not instill confidence that this has been a thoughtfully constructed bill that is truly in the best interests of Iowa's students. Please remember that you are not just dealing with dollar signs and test scores, but actual students who deserve equitable access to quality education across our state, and teachers, administrators, and AEA staff who are vested in providing it to the best of their ability given the resources and training that they have. Please continue to work on fixing what may not be working well, with PEOPLE in mind. This current bill does not fix the problems. I do have confidence that the House and Senate can do better. Please vote NO on this bill and keep working to find a better solution. Thank you very much for your time and efforts on this matter.

Name: Jeremy Parrish

Comment: I ask that you oppose the passing of this bill. While it is an improvement over the original, it will still hurt the students of Iowa in the long run.

Name: Vanessa Moore

Comment: Please vote no again and slow this process down the voters do not want this.

Name: Amanda McMartin

Comment: Please slow down this process and invite all stakeholders to the table to discuss. This does not need to be legislated. The AEAs have and can work together along with other education professionals to make any necessary changes. Vote no for the childrens and schools sake, it would be irresponsible not to.

Name: Marissa Flugum

Comment: Once again, I am begging you NOT to pass this bill. AEA was a lifeline, with Early Access Services for all three of my children. AEA provides so many invaluable services for Iowa children, please dont sell us out. Im speaking up for the kids who dont have a voice, but may need PT/OT, SLP, behavior IEPs, mental health. This will hurt rural districts that are already struggling. Thank you.

Name: Amanda Feters

Comment: Vote no. This bill will deprive rural Iowans of services and impede mental health care for students.

Name: Ambre Grund

Comment: I appreciate that work has been done to amend the original version of this bill, however the amended bill continues to give control over decisions and services to the Department of Education in Des Moines, does not ensure equity of services (especially for smaller districts), and does not provide a stable, professional structure that is so critical to building strong relationships between teachers, AEA providers, parents and children. I am extremely concerned about this bill, please vote no.

Name: Mike Upah

Comment: Dear Legislator, I do not support the AEA bills. I believe the AEA systems would benefit from some study ... but the arguments from the Governor's office as to what problem we are trying to solve keep changing and are based on cherry picked data ... telling me there are ulterior motives involved. Why do these bills keep trying to reduce local control?!? I ask that you do NOT support this bill. Sincerely, Mike UpahHuxley, IA

Name: Lilly Jensen

Comment: I urge you to vote no on continued discussion of HSB 713 or any other bill that drives changes to Iowa's AEA system without careful, thoughtful, and preemptive review of the consequences such changes will have on Iowa's education system and student learning and accomplishment. Iowa's Area Education Agency system is effective, purposeful, true to mission, and essential to Iowa's education system. They

provide important services to all students and support all schools, but they are especially important to rural, small schools like those found in Northeast Iowa. My son Nelson is currently a firstgrader in the Decorah Community School District. At age two, he had barely begun speaking and his inability to communicate was affecting his behavior. We were referred by our doctor to the AEA for their "Early Access" services. AEA staff conducted hearing and cognitive tests and determined he qualified for an IEP and needed speech therapy. So, for a year, an AEA speech pathologist came to my house once a week in the evening in order to accommodate my work schedule and provided that therapy, including helping me and my husband understand what we could do to help Nelson. Then, when Nelson started preschool, they went to his preschool twice a week for two and a half years. Early in kindergarten, we met with the speech pathologist and Nelson's teacher and all collectively decided that therapy was no longer needed. Now, Nelson is a great student and has zero speech or communication issues. The services provided by the AEA played a huge role in that, not only because it supported his communication development at a critical life stage for him, but because the services were provided in a way that made it as easy for us to utilize them as possible: around our schedule and during his school day. I have witnessed and experienced a wide array of other AEA services. The day after the devastating shooting at Perry High School, I received an email from the Decorah Superintendent stating that AEA crisis team members were on hand to support any student that needed someone to talk to. When I was a county naturalist, I was trained by the Keystone AEA Science Consultant to operate their \$50,000 digital planetarium in Winneshiek County Schools. That same consultant helped me and local teachers better understand the Iowa CORE science standards and how our lessons and programs can achieve them. My kids have access to new and different books in their classrooms because of the AEA media library. They especially love "Bookflix" on their school ipads, but don't know that the AEA is the one paying that subscription fee. Our teachers receive professional development from AEA staff that ensures they are up to date on instructional strategies, content, and effective teaching. The AEA system is nothing if not efficient. If it disappears or the services it provides are slashed, schools will have to find replacement services on their own. Every district or school will have to hire their own speech therapists and mental health counselors (if they can find them), pay all the subscription fees (or whichever few they can afford), and will have to coordinate mandated professional development on their own. There will be unnecessary duplication and wasted spending. Because some services aren't needed continuously, districts will waste time, energy, and money shuffling staff and establishing complicated sharing agreements between themselves, rather than utilizing the effective and efficient AEA system. Small, rural districts and schools public and private alike will be hurt the most. The private companies touted as alternatives AEA's will focus on dense, more profitable urban school districts and rural schools will, once again, be left out to dry with no one to meet their needs or help their students.

Name: Buffy Peters

Comment: I implore you to oppose this horrible bill. The AEA's in this state are a lifeline for schools facing so many obstacles to be able to provide the best care and education for all students. There are so many vital services this bill looks to eliminate which will be a detriment to so many. I find this bill especially disrespectful when you look at the services this bill looks to eliminate, like crisis services, when you look at the care the AEA has provided and continues to provide for Perry following the recent school shooting and the countless other crises that they have responded to since. These school communities stand a chance at coming back from those crisis in the best possible way because of the support from the AEA. This bill will gut a system that has adjusted over the last 50 years to continue to adapt to the best practices in providing resources for schools. If there are changes that need made, gutting the AEA's is not the answer. Bring the key players who have knowledge and experience who can find creative ways to alleviate the issues at hand. Talk with your constituents. LISTEN to your constituents. Iowans are coming out in full force to

oppose this bad bill because of the disservice this does to our schools and to our kids.

Name: Jonathan Danker

Comment: Please Vote No on HSB 713. As an Autistic Person, AEA helped me with my education when I was growing up. This bill could see unintended consequences like a one on one associate could lose her job and child doesnt have the needs to succeed in schools. If you want to help students and teacher, Please Vote No on HSB 713.

Name: Taresa Fetzer

Comment: Please vote no on HSB713. As an AEA speech language pathologist, I have significant concerns raised by this bill. Without the interconnectedness of all support services, general education services and media services students in Iowa will suffer. I am able to do my job so well because I have an amazing team of professionals to collaborate with. We all know each other and we all support each other. On a daily basis, I access my other AEA support staff (SLPs, OTs, PTs, ITDHH, Audiologists, etc). I access the AEA media center. I access my curriculum consultants, my psychs, my special ed consultants, my social workers. I am able to access them because we all work together, for one common cause...To support the students in our building. And I say our building because that is how we think of it. We are a member of the building teams and are there for them no matter what they need. If this bill is passed, I fear that I will no longer have a team to rely on. If I do, I fear that it will be a revolving door of staff that change randomly throughout the year. There is no way to provide great, consistent service for our students in a "fee for service" model. It just won't be as effective. Kids will suffer. Please, Please slow down this process and let's get this right! There is no going back once this bill is passed.

Name: Mke Ripp

Comment: Now is the time to listen to the voice of the public. Vote NO on this bill.

Name: Luke Morlan

Comment: This bill should have died in the last subcommittee meeting. Have you forgotten that there is not support for any of this from your constituents? Pretty risky in an election year. Kill this bill and listen to the public outcry. Giving control to the IDE and allowing school districts to pull out of the AEAs will have Swiss cheese effect and eventually cripple their ability to function. You can't amend your way out this horrible legislation.

Name: Mary Lutz

Comment: Iowans are raising their voices in opposition to changes being made to the AEA. Time to show support to the AEA. Stop this bill from moving forward.

Name: Tiffany McCuiston

Comment: Please vote no. AEA services are indispensable!

Name: Paul Wermers

Comment: Hi, I'd like to address the concern regarding the public comment process and the speed of legislative actions, particularly regarding HSB713. It's understandable to feel that the process is rushed when bills are introduced and voted on within a short timeframe, leaving limited opportunity for public input. The purpose of public comment is indeed to gather feedback from citizens like yourself, and it's essential for fostering transparency and accountability in governance. When bills are rapidly introduced and voted on, it can hinder the ability of the public to provide meaningful input and can potentially lead to decisions that do not fully consider the perspectives of all stakeholders. In the case of HSB713, the rapid timeline may indeed present challenges in obtaining comprehensive feedback from the public. It's crucial for lawmakers to consider the importance of allowing adequate time for review and input from constituents before making decisions on significant legislation. I

appreciate your engagement in the democratic process and your call for a more inclusive approach to policymaking. Your concerns regarding the speed of legislative actions and the need for thorough public feedback are valid and deserve careful consideration. As for your request to vote 'nay' on all related matters, it's important for legislators to carefully evaluate each bill based on its merits and impact, taking into account both public input and expert analysis. While I cannot advocate for specific voting decisions, I encourage you to continue expressing your views to your elected representatives and engaging in constructive dialogue to advocate for policies that reflect the interests of "We the People." Thank you for sharing your thoughts, and I hope your concerns are addressed in the legislative process. Wermers from Spillville

Name: Amy Croll

Comment: As someone who has worked in statewide policy, in treatment centers with shelter schools completely operated by the AEA, and as a social worker who is often approached by families looking for pathways forward for solutions to their children's challenges, I urge you to vote no. Just last night, I referred a family to the AEA for a required reevaluation that in the private sector has a 2.5 YEAR waiting list. As I made the recommendation, I urged them to act quickly because their legislature is trying to decimate THEIR ONLY resource. AEAs provide a very valuable service in an environment where mental health and family/educational support systems are incredibly stretched thin. Iowa families and our children deserve access to the services the AEA provides. This legislation would further decimate the already fairly nonexistent rural services in Iowa.

Name: Christopher Pierson

Comment: As a voting republican I ask that you please vote no on the AEA restructuring bill. This bill is contrary to the big ideas in the party platform. It moves unprecedented amounts of power into the hands of the director of the Iowa Department of Education, usurping local control. The director of the DOE is a political appointee and that power can shift whenever there is an election. It is bigger government, not smaller. AEAs ARE accountable via board members elected by the schools they serve, an accreditation process that includes the DOE and stakeholders, and have yearly financial audits from CPAs. This is more accountability to the people than the director of the DOE has. Furthermore, the Director of the DOE is a political appointee with a political science degree and is the 3rd appointee in 5 years. The DOE has had incredible turnover in the last five years. How would this move increase leadership of education in Iowa? It won't. How will schools receive consistent qualified staff from year to year in a fee for service model? They won't. The lack of continuity will cause need to flex AEA staff from location to location, increasing turnover, decreasing long term knowledge of students and systems. This is a brain drain for education. The finance formula is a trojan horse to continue financial cuts to schools. One can predict spending authority and ability to carry special ed deficits when necessary will be eliminated with a net funding reduction to schools. This exposes this bill for what it is, an underfunding of the education system. Responsible capitalists understand that an educated workforce and society is necessary for a strong enduring nation in with all prosper. This bill creates inequity of rural and urban. This will result in haves and have nots. As a republican, I am concerned that the republicans pushing this bill have a deaf ear to the overwhelming outcry of opposition from Iowans. This will be remembered by republican voters at the ballot box, and those that support this bill will lose support of Iowans. Why must to value out of state think tanks powered by extremist ideology over the voting citizens of our state? I hope that you respect Iowans more then you fear the Governor. Vote No!

Name: Jessie Jessie

Comment: Please vote NO on HSB 713. AEA's provide a variety of services to Iowa schools. This WILL NEGATIVELY impact Iowa, children, and staff. Stakeholders should be in these meetings if meaningful change is what is wanted. Education in Iowa is

already suffering, and this bill will further that suffering. VOTE NO!

Name: Gary Reid

Comment: I am opposed to making any changes in the AEA bill. Why fix something that is not broken? Iowa students and teaching staff need the services.

Name: Jordin Roberts

Comment: Please oppose this bill. Vote NO. This will be harmful to the entire state as the AEA is important to ALL students, not just special education. The AEA has been so helpful, especially to help mental health supports for students in rural or hard to reach areas. This bill would be detrimental to all children as well as services providers. I am a school based therapist in DSM and have many clients who use this service. This would greatly impact my clients in a negative way. Lead by example. Make POSITIVE changes to mental health care, especially for children as we are in a mental health crisis and this is NOT helping.

Name: Eli Cochrane

Comment: VOTE NO. I am writing to you all in support of the AEA and the services it is currently providing the school districts in Iowa. I was shocked to see the Governor is proposing to cut funding for a service we use daily in our buildings. It appears that the Governor does not know the impact this will have in the classrooms and buildings. I will be attending my second AEA training this week. With cuts, I will most likely not be able to attend professional development to not only help the students in my building, but also the staff. I'm disgusted that we are even thinking of cutting something so precious to districts. "Students served" by AEAs is drastically more than the numbers show as we utilize AEA staff for various situations regardless of whether someone is going to be served through special education services. I urge you to vote against these ridiculous changes that will be detrimental to our students. If cuts are made it will only be more chaotic and difficult to get students the support they need and staff the critical professional development they need. It is very apparent people on the frontline dealing with these issues every day have not been talked to about how this will directly affect their jobs and student outcomes.

Name: Esther Huston

Comment: As a mom of eight children, aunt, and grandma, I ask you to vote NO. My son currently receives services from the AEA, my daughter is currently being evaluated for her special needs in the classroom by them, and my nephew who is 3 receives hearing/speech services from them. They are a vital part of the educational system and should receive more funding and support not attacks like this. I do not understand why this is being considered. I have not talked to one person who has children receiving services from the AEA who is in support of this. Why is this being considered if we the people are against it? Please represent us well by voting no, and focusing on what the true needs of Iowan children are.

Name: Terese Grant

Comment: HSB 713 is a bill that is not necessary. The AEAs do work for our schools in Iowa should not be restricted. Please vote NO.

Name: Kathy Toms

Comment: Please vote No on this bill. My school district is rural. The AEA is used for staff development, continuing ed credits, providing services above and beyond special education. Schools in need of assistance can get coaching, AEAs serve as a reference for school boards, printing for schools is done at AEAs. Iowas AEAs work to ensure ALL Iowa children have equal opportunity for excellent education. Rural schools typically would not have the resources to take on missing services. Who is pushing this? AEAs are media, Ed services, special ed support with the purpose of avoiding duplication of programs and services and now it seems that the Governor wants to

unravel this whole consolidating other departments. Again I ask why? Kathy Toms

Name: Zach Sheeley

Comment: AEAs are so important to the families I work with in Iowa. From undiagnosed disabilities, to additional resources for students, to testing to help students succeed for the betterment of our states, AEA's provide a huge value to the state of Iowa. Not just for the "current Iowa" either. The future Iowa, for the 5th grader who needs testing to identify dyslexia who may become your local dentist or eye doctor. AEA's have been helping Iowa schools succeed, which has helped IOWA succeed in the long run.

Name: Judy Stanfley

Comment: Please vote NO! There needs to be bipartisan committee with all stakeholders at the table. This will hurt small and rural school districts. This takes away control from local school districts and directs it to the Iowa Department of Education in Des Moines. The Department of Education employees are not in our school buildings. Control needs to stay LOCAL. This needs to be tabled since the original law was based on incorrect information from the Guidehouse report. Why is this being rushed through when mass amounts of constituents have said they don't want it? Please listen to the people of Iowa who voted you into office, not special interest groups from out of state. Please vote NO!

Name: Julie Rinker

Comment: Do not make changes to Iowa's AEAs without further stakeholder meetings. Too much is at stake by disrupting our school systems across the state. More time should be taken with input from Iowans, not an outofstate group.

Name: JoAnna Scott

Comment: Taking away such valuable resources from our youth and their families can't be good for anyone. More children will see delay in getting identified for services, not be able to get access to treatments, and ultimately will increase likelihoods of being more dependent on a system that can't support them (medicaid, Social security, food programs, etc)The AEA needs more funding, not less!

Name: Sandi Sickels

Comment: As a taxpayer, grandmother, and mental health professional in the educational setting for over 30 years in Iowa, I urge you to vote NO on this amendment. You cannot ensure our children in rural areas and small schools will not be without services and supports with this legislation. You also cannot ensure that this legislation will improve the academic achievement of students with IEPs. What we do know is that this legislation will result in districts, teachers, students, and families going without the services they currently have. I also urge you to make sure that children in rural areas are able to access mental health services such as those currently provided through operational sharing between districts and AEAs. Vote NO to this amended bill and yes for our Iowa students.

Name: Gladys Alvarez

Comment: I urge you to vote no on this bill and the amendment. The AEA system in Iowa is essential to the support of both students, parents, teachers, staff and communities. They provide crisis services, evidence based interventions and trainings. I would suggest taking the time to more thoroughly examine the issue/concerns versus the benefits for all students and get input from those who will be impacted, especially those who need mental health, occupational therapy, speech therapy etc in rural areas. The Governor states that she is concerned about the suicide rates in the school system and the importance of improving/supporting mental health services for our youth. This bill will have the opposite effect.Please vote no on the bill and its amendment. Thank you.

Name: Jade Rowell

Comment: Please vote no! This bill will be detrimental to public education.

Name: Jeanie Wade-Wade

Comment: I am opposed to this AEA bill. Please listen to constituents who have experience with the ARAs. If people have not had need for the ARAs they often do not know they exist. What is the rush on this. Remember you represent citizens not just Governor Reynolds . Vote no

Name: Kelly Gerhardt

Comment: Please vote No to the amended bill! None of the changes that are made in the bill have any substance of proof that they will help to better support students with disabilities or improve outcomes and close gaps or how these changes will give all of our students the same services and resources they currently receive without costing more money IF the districts can afford them. This bill devalues local control! It seems there is a rush to turn control over to the Department of Education with no founded reasons why this would benefit the students, teachers and families in Iowa. Please, please slow down this process!! We need to make informed decisions to help and improve services to our students, teachers and families! Please take the time to do a comprehensive study so the right decisions are made! The AEAs have repeatedly stated that they are very open and willing to (and want to) look at whatever concerns there may be to make sure we are doing the right thing for our students. Please take the time needed to meet with all stakeholders before making a decision!

Name: Twyla Scherbring

Comment: Why are the children of our state being sacrificed for the Dollar. What a selfish excuse for all the educational changes you are passing.

Name: Paul & Kim Wise

Comment: First, thank you for being curious and open to new information. You've given Iowans hope that the legislative process can work! As farmers, land owners and parents to four, we appreciate you paying attention to Iowa tax payers. PLEASE continue to listen and vote NO on this bill. The original drive behind this legislation is purportedly to better support students with disabilities. This is an unsubstantiated and a rather bold claim. In fact, it is unclear how any of these changes will improve outcomes and close gaps for students with disabilities, or address federal compliance concerns. We need to slow down this process. AEAs and districts cannot plan for the upcoming school year, set their budgets, hire staff and make decisions about how to work with this new system in the next four months. We need to study this more before moving forward. Keeping everything the same for one year, increases the likelihood that we don't make matters worse for our students, families, and schools. This bill devalues local control. While districts get to decide how to use the special education and education services funding, the Iowa Department of Education still has overreach. The AEAs are open to improvement opportunities, but we must be thoughtful in our approach. We would recommend a review of the AEAs be conducted, with representatives such as superintendents, parents, AEA staff, and other key stakeholders at the table, utilizing the data we all agree on. Thanks again for being willing to listen and what's right for rural Iowa schools!

Name: Gina Dob

Comment: Thanks for trying to make this bill better. You're not there yet. Please vote no. Do this right and spend some time gathering information that may actually help students.

Name: Karen Hesse

Comment: Please vote no on this amendment. While I appreciate the efforts to improve upon the governor's original bill, this amendment still does not address the grave concerns that

the voters of Iowa are expressing. Please heed the advice of expert educators who understand the negative consequences that the proposed changes to AEAs will have for students and school districts, especially in rural areas. Please respect the overwhelming majority of Iowans who continue to speak out against this revised bill. Many suggestions have been made for how we can slow this process down and seek to thoroughly understand any problems that this legislation is seeking to address. Please listen to your constituents. Thank you.

Name: Tracy Chorpening

Comment: Please vote no as your constituents have asked. The authoritarian power provided to the Dept of Ed, in this bill, is just plain wrong. They should not have that kind of unchecked power (Kim is often preaching about checks and balances and accountability). This bill hurts Iowans, all of them. This bill is seriously damaging to the entire educational structure of Iowa. There are so many bad items we don't have enough time to discuss them, which appears intentional. Vote No. Destroy the bill. We should be looking at articles of impeachment for how Kim hid Covid data to reopen schools in 2020.

Name: Amanda Phaydavong

Comment: Please vote No. As a mother of a child with special needs, slow down this process. Do more research and truly understand what the goals are and best approach measures to obtain them. Do this by also listening to everyone. Why is there a rush to do this now? Is the goal still to obtain higher test scores because I don't see how that happens with any of the AEA bills currently. Do the research before doing harm to kids with special needs.

Name: Lynnette Rochford

Comment: Please vote no on this amended bill. Why is it being rushed through without taking sufficient time to look at all sides of the issues? Our rural schools in Iowa will be hurt even more than they are now, if this bill is passed. Our AEAs are serving the needs of so many Iowa students, and taking away services will not help our students achieve their maximum. Please vote no on this bill.

Name: Miranda Galvin

Comment: Please value AEAs and everything they do for our students!

Name: Megan Hayes

Comment: I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the importance of legislators listening to their constituents and encouraging public input on legislation, particularly in relation to HSB 713. As a resident of Iowa and a constituent, I firmly believe that our democracy functions best when elected officials actively engage with and consider the opinions and concerns of the people they represent. It is through this process that legislation can truly reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. For the THOUSANDS of letters received it feels like HSB 713 is being forced through and NOT responded to the request of the majority to SLOW DOWN and fully reassess the impact on education in the state of Iowa.

Name: Brandie Gean

Comment: VOTE NO! This is NOT good for Iowa, rural schools especially, and definitely not kids!

Name: Julie King

Comment: I appreciate that you tabled HSB 542. I did not see any PUBLIC support for that bill and after reading this one, I believe there will be no public support for this one. Calling it by a different name, submitting it close to time the time planned to vote on it feels like you are trying to get the same bill passed under the radar. These bill will

but barriers up that were dropped in 1974 that will hurt our rural youth the most. 80% of Iowa's schools would not be able to provide the same level of services and supports without the AEAs the big districts subsidize the costs so all students in Iowa have access to quality education. Do you think that Des Moines, Iowa City, or Cedar Rapids are going to willingly give up funds so that the children in Brooklyn Iowa can get adequate educational supports? I certainly do not see the district that have 1:1 MacBooks offering to give them to the schools I go to that have only overhead projectors.

Name: Maureen Lonsdale

Comment: Please vote NO to this amended AEA bill. The original drive behind this legislation is to better support students with disabilities. This is an unsubstantiated and a rather bold claim. In fact, it is unclear how any of these changes will improve outcomes and close gaps for students with disabilities, or address federal compliance concerns. I encourage you to slow down and do a study with ALL stakeholders at the table. We need to get this right! Families and children deserve it! Ask yourself Can I guarantee with these changes that ALL districts in Iowa will have access to all services and supports that they have now? I can give you one example that says no. This bill eliminates operational sharing between districts and AEAs. In our area, that is how districts are funded social workers to provide mental health services in the district. This was a need identified a few years ago and a partnership was developed between districts and AEAs to meet that need. Vote NO for Iowa's families and children!

Name: Kris K

Comment: This will force small districts to close; there is no longer local control over raising tax rates to sustain the significant loss of AEA support. Our small rural district has 22 AEA staff members available to us at a moment's notice. Where do we hire them?? When we have a new student who needs audiology support, how long will that child wait until the DE aligns support? How will a fee for service model work when the AEA can't hire employees? Where will the Media flowthrough dollars go? SLOW down this process and work with those who know the work. LISTEN to your constituents.

Name: Sara Mcintee

Comment: Please leave AEA alone! This is a solution in search of a problem. This will only harm rural school districts which are already struggling. What happened to Iowa values and support of our children?

Name: Judy Nadrchal

Comment: Please don't rush this decision! Lack of consistent funding will hurt schools, students, and providers job security. As a parent of a child with a 504 plan, I am worried he won't get the services he needs from an AEA audiologist to hear instruction properly. A 504 plan is a general education service. Please do a comprehensive review with all stakeholders to determine what is really needed to improve student performance. Please vote NO!

Name: Lauren Vanderhorst

Comment: I continue to be opposed to AEA reform without a comprehensive study of our educational system in Iowa this needs to include input from all stakeholders. I am very concerned about the impact this bill will have on rural school districts (no economy of scale) and am further concerned how this will impact mental health supports within school districts. Please vote no and take a full year to study all aspects of this issue. Our children and schools depend on your responsible decision making.

Name: Jeri Messenger

Comment: Please vote no to any bill/amendment regarding the AEAs. Listen to your voters.

Create a bipartisan commission and allow at least a year to study and evaluate how the AEAs can best serve all teachers and students in all schools. Allow no more budget cuts to the AEAs and the public schools. Stop this before irreparable harm is done to Iowas public education.

Name: Jennifer Santiago

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. This type of change should not be fasttracked. There should be a Local study with all stakeholders to identify any possible issues and proposed solutions, including an explanation of how any proposed changes will help.

Name: Alicia Claypool

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. It will significantly harm services provided by AEAs to rural school districts and their disabled students and families. The report upon which this bill is based is suspect and a terrible basis for disrupting lives! Further, no sound reason has been made for why moving control to DE will improve learning g for students, increase efficiencies or save money. Absolutely no good reason to do this. It looks like a power grab by the Governor and shuts out the voices and therefore local control for parents and local districts. Whatever happened to the R mantra that local government is best?

Name: Pamela Havlicek

Comment: I oppose this bill as do those whom I work with. We live in rural Iowa. I am an educator and our small rural district needs the resources that AEA provides. We do not have resources nor the funds to provide these services and resources. Education has long been under funded in Iowa and thus we have not been able to keep up with getting adequate resources and materials for our students. AEA helps fill the void left by the under funding. Iowa parents and educators are NOT ASKING FOR THIS to be taken away! Do not vote for this bill. Iowa needs to demand Kim Reynolds put educators back into the department of education.

Name: Emma Bouza

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. Listen to your constituents. Iowans overwhelmingly are opposed to this piece of legislation. Please remember you are representing the people who voted for you. The fact that this is being rushed through like it is, means it will not be properly implemented. Which, ultimately hurts the very children you are claiming to help.

Name: Kelsey Owens

Comment: Thank you for the revisions to the original bill, your work is much appreciated. With that, please take the time to build upon your work by SLOWING DOWN and voting NO to HSB 713. The AEAs are open to improvement opportunities, but we must be thoughtful in our approach. We would recommend a review of the AEAs be conducted, with representatives such as superintendents, parents, AEA staff, and other key stakeholders at the table, utilizing the data we all agree on.

Name: Kerry Moore Kroneman

Comment: This need for speed on the dismantling of the AEAs is crazy. Everyone of you has heard from Iowans about what good things the AEAs has done for districts and children. For example, providing counseling support for the Perry schools. Any changes to this ssupport system needs to take a thoughtul approach and include the people involved like teachers, consultants, and families. Please drop this bill or replace with a bill to collect data and talk to those involved with intention to propose changes next year.

Name: Anna Westermeyer Marlin

Comment: Vote no. Stop taking away local school rights, and keep AEAs serving our kids in full capacity! There is no need to scrap the system just because revisions need made!

This amendment causes more concern as well. Please slow down and do this right revise, don't ruin.

Name: Caleb Bonjour

Comment: Caleb Bonjour
Superintendent Gladbrook Reinbeck CSD 600 Blackhawk Street Reinbeck, IA 50669
caleb.bonjour@rebels.net
February 15, 2024
To the Members of the House Education Subcommittee:
Subject: Strong Opposition to HSB 713
Dear Honorable Members, I am writing to you today as the superintendent of Your School District, representing a rural community deeply intertwined with the values and expectations of local governance in education. My purpose in writing this letter is to voice unequivocal opposition to House Study Bill 713 (HSB 713), which I believe undermines the very principles that have long upheld our state's educational system. The amendments proposed under SSB 3073, which HSB 713 furthers, depict a shift in educational oversight that is both alarming and regressive. It is a move that favors larger and more affluent districts while leaving smaller and rural schools at a significant disadvantage. HSB 713 is poised to centralize power within the Department of Education, a department that has seen a revolving door of leadership, with six directors in the past twelve years. This instability is a harbinger of the challenges ahead, should the bill pass. More so, the current director's lack of firsthand experience as a school leader or educator in Iowa casts doubt on their ability to empathetically and effectively guide our AEAs and school districts. The bill's pivot to a fee-for-service model for special education and the cessation of operational sharing agreements are particularly concerning. These changes threaten to erode the essential support structures upon which smaller districts rely, potentially leaving our most vulnerable students without necessary resources and heightening the burden on local taxpayers. Moreover, HSB 713 lacks clarity on critical issues such as funding specifics, service contracting, and the impact on collaboration between districts and AEAs. Without clear directives and assurances, our districts are navigating in the dark, unable to plan for the future or to ensure that we can continue providing the quality of education our communities expect and deserve. I implore the members of this subcommittee to consider the long-term ramifications of HSB 713. Education in Iowa has always been a collaborative effort, relying on the strength and support of AEAs and the local control that empowers districts to meet the unique needs of their communities. This bill, as it stands, threatens to dismantle this successful structure and replace it with a system that centralizes decisions, disregards the nuances of local needs, and destabilizes the progress we have worked so hard to achieve. Let us not forget that these decisions will resonate beyond the walls of our schools and into the future of our state. I stand ready to engage in constructive dialogue to find solutions that truly serve the best interests of Iowa's students and educators. Thank you for your attention to this matter of great importance. Sincerely, Caleb Bonjour

Name: Claire Pittman

Comment: I ask that you oppose HSB 713. This amendment continues to lack concrete measures as to how these changes to the AEA will directly impact the test scores of special education students. This bill cripples the AEA's ability to maintain a full staff and provide comprehensive services to all of Iowa's students.

Name: Tiffany Jund

Comment: VOTE NO! Your constituents do NOT want this! Your teachers do NOT want this! The MAJORITY of the schools DO NOT want this or ANY part of this bill! LISTEN! Keep ALL children at the forefront of your choices! Keep your grandchildren in MIND! This will DISMANTLE ALL of education in Iowa! There is NO PLAN or PEOPLE in place with the current DE to take ANY of these recommendations on! Do the comprehensive study next year with ALL stakeholders not just the wealthy school districts! LISTEN to your LOCAL voters! VOTE NO!!!

Name: Amy Ball

Comment: I would love to know why the AEA is still a priority when 99.999999% of constituents have said they want them left alone or at the very least carefully studied so changes won't negatively impact students. Yet, here we are. Another sloppy bill. What a huge waste of taxpayer money. I will make it my life's mission to work against your reelection. If you think I'm alone in this sentiment, pass this through.

Name: Andrea Sharp

Comment: Please vote no! This amendment doesn't improve the original bill in any way. If our education system declines, everything declines. Do you want that as part of your legacy? Changes need time. A thorough evaluation with more time to create an appropriate plan is needed. Ask yourself who this is benefitting. If it isn't our students, then vote against this change!

Name: Liz O'Neil

Comment: As an independent voter I strongly oppose this bill and the revisions of this bill. I have two children, one of which would not be here on this earth, without the support of the AEA. When school became unmanageable for one of my children and the school district did not have the ability to assist the AEA was there for us the entire time. They made sure we had the resources and support we needed. That child, after almost a decade of weekly AEA support, just graduated part of his IEP, can read, and has hope for the first time in his life. These children NEED the important people of the AEA.

Name: Amanda Rink

Comment: Please vote no to this bill. AEAs are an essential piece of Iowa education.

Name: William Tilly

Comment: Please vote NO on this bill. There is NO reason to rush here and many of the proposals contained are not completely thought out and some are quite ill advised. Creating a huge bureaucracy within the department of Ed to control local provision of special education services will NOT improve results. It has been tried before in our state. This is just one example. There are so many provisions that need much deeper study than has been done with many questions to answer. As it stands, THIS BILL WILL HARM IOWAS CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS. 500 thousand children are counting on you to protect their interests. We are Iowans, that's what we do. Family is everything. Given the magnitude of what's being proposed this bill, with the tectonic impacts it will have, the ONLY responsible vote is NO to this bill! And YES to a comprehensive study of the impacts of these proposals BEFORE they are implemented. If these changes are worth making, they are worth making in an informed, thoughtful way. Next session is soon enough! VOTE NO!

Name: Nathaniel Vander Linden

Comment: As a parent of two children who receive/received services from AEA I ask you to oppose this bill. We have been faced with year long sometimes even year waiting lists to receive supports for our children. AEA was able to provide services immediately and that immediate intervention makes a difference not only to students but to families. If a school district opts to not utilize AEA it is our students who will hurt and their IEPs will be neglected and out of compliance due to the long wait lists private organizations have. The consequences of the bill are detrimental to our children. The quality of services received is at risk as well and I don't think we should gamble when it comes to children's education. I am also concerned about the outdated information being used in this bill and lack of care for the voices of those impacted the most. Please hear our concerns and act on the voices of those you serve

Name: Angie Hance

Comment: Please vote against. This bill still does not provide the support that districts and students will need. The AEA is a long standing organization that deserves much more consideration for change than has been given here. You cannot tear down an

institution without knowing the short and long term implications of proposed changes. A study needs to be done. School districts value our services based on the Hanover Survey which is done regularly. One of my biggest concerns is about an AEA's opportunity to operationally share AEA's are able to help districts with things like special education director, therapeutic services with a masters level social worker, HR, and others. Under the new bill, AEA's will not be able to operationally share as they would no longer be considered a "political subdivision." The original drive behind this legislation is purportedly to better support students with disabilities. This is an unsubstantiated and a rather bold claim. In fact, it is unclear how any of these changes will improve outcomes and close gaps for students with disabilities, or address federal compliance concerns. We need to slow down this process. AEA's and districts cannot plan for the upcoming school year, set their budgets, hire staff and make decisions about how to work with this new system in the next four months. We need to study this more before moving forward. Keeping everything the same for one year, increases the likelihood that we don't make matters worse for our students, families, and schools. This bill devalues local control. While districts get to decide how to use the special education and education services funding, the Iowa Department of Education still has overreach. The AEA's are open to improvement opportunities, but we must be thoughtful in our approach. We would recommend a review of the AEA's be conducted, with representatives such as superintendents, parents, AEA staff, and other key stakeholders at the table, utilizing the data we all agree on.

Name: Alanna Levin

Comment: Please include education experts in your conversations!! This bill will especially jeopardize rural school districts

Name: Danielle Martens

Comment: Please vote no on this legislation. This will negatively harm our students, schools, and especially our rural districts.

Name: Stephanie Robinson

Comment: The original drive behind this legislation is purportedly to better support students with disabilities. This is an unsubstantiated and a rather bold claim. In fact, it is unclear how any of these changes will improve outcomes and close gaps for students with disabilities, or address federal compliance concerns. We need to slow down this process. AEA's and districts cannot plan for the upcoming school year, set their budgets, hire staff and make decisions about how to work with this new system in the next four months. We need to study this more before moving forward. Keeping everything the same for one year, increases the likelihood that we don't make matters worse for our students, families, and schools. This bill devalues local control. While districts get to decide how to use the special education and education services funding, the Iowa Department of Education still has overreach. The AEA's are open to improvement opportunities, but we must be thoughtful in our approach. We would recommend a review of the AEA's be conducted, with representatives such as superintendents, parents, AEA staff, and other key stakeholders at the table, utilizing the data we all agree on.

Name: Caleb Bonjour

Comment: Caleb Bonjour
Reinbeck, IA 50669
calebbonjour@gmail.com
February 15, 2024
Dear Members of the House Education Subcommittee:
Subject: Parental Concerns Regarding HSB 713
As a parent of three children attending Iowa schools, I am writing to express my profound concern regarding House Study Bill 713 (HSB 713). The proposed changes to our state's educational system are not only disconcerting; they threaten to disrupt the very fabric of our children's educational experiences. The shift towards centralization and the Department of Education's increased control over special education and professional development is a departure from the local

oversight that has historically been responsive to our children's needs. The lack of stability within the Department, with six directors in just twelve years, signals potential risks to the consistency and quality of services our children receive. The move to a fee-for-service model for special education could create inequalities that are particularly worrisome. As a parent in a rural district, my fear is that the services which have been crucial for the support and growth of my children may become financially inaccessible, or worse, diluted in quality due to budgetary constraints. Furthermore, the discontinuation of operational sharing agreements could limit the resources and opportunities available to students, particularly those in special education. The implications of such a shift could be dire, affecting not only the educational outcomes of our children but also the broader community which relies on the schools as pillars of learning and development. Clarity is sorely needed regarding the specifics of funding, the contracting of services, and the overall impact on district collaboration with AEAs. Without a clear understanding of how these changes will be implemented, it is impossible to support a bill that appears to undercut the values of community, equality, and educational excellence. I strongly urge the subcommittee to reconsider the trajectory of HSB 713. As a parent, my priority is the wellbeing and future success of my children and by extension, all children in Iowa. We need assurances that our voices are heard and that decisions made at the state level will not hinder the potential of our youngest and most vulnerable citizens. Thank you for your dedication to Iowa's educational standards and for taking the time to consider the concerns of a parent deeply invested in the future of our state's education system. Sincerely, Caleb Bonjour

Name: Morgan Morgan

Comment: I STRONGLY urge you to VOTE NO for this version of the bill. This bill devalues local control. Districts may get to decide how to use the special education and education services funding, but the DEPT of ED STILL HAS OVERREACH. AEAs are open to improvement but we need to be thoughtful about the approach. I would recommend a review of the AEAs be conducted with representatives such as superintendents, parents, AEA staff, and other key stakeholders at the table, utilizing the data we all agree on. The "data" behind this legislation is unsubstantiated and it's unclear how the changes will improve outcomes and close gaps for students with disabilities. Look at the sheer number of emails you have received from constituents who are parents, teachers, school staff, and community members who are asking for a thoughtful and thorough review of AEAs.

Name: Lesley Christensen

Comment: As a Mental Health Coordinator in one of the larger school districts in Iowa, I will say I could not manage the need in our district without the support of the AEA. They are often the only support and intervention families have access to. If we want to address the real issue, those would be to try to schedule a psychological evaluation for a child with Medicaid. Seriously, please try to do this today! Appointments in the Des Moines metro area are eighteen to twenty-four months out. Families have likely changed phone numbers or moved prior to the appointment becoming available. If you have your staff actually take the time to do this you will soon learn where the real problems exist in our broken system here in Iowa and will stop pushing a bill that is a major distraction from solving the real challenges families are facing every day. Please do not support this bill. Vote no!

Name: Valery Fuhrman

Comment: Vote NO!! This bill is not good for Iowa students and schools. There needs to be much more time spent collecting facts, asking more questions, getting direct answers, meeting with a broader range of stakeholders, and studying the potential impacts of decisions. This bill is against Iowa values of local control by centralizing so much decision making to the Director of the DE (who is not an educator and is a direct appointee to the Governor) or to a position that is not even hired yet. There is always opportunity to consider ways to provide improved services but this bill does

not make things better for students.

Name: Michelle Richardson-Tenuta

Comment: Vote NO

Name: Morgan Dodge

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. I am a social worker who is based out of Des Moines, but works with clients in Dallas and Madison county. The differences between access to essential services for students is striking when compared to Des Moines. Some of these rural communities have absolutely NO mental/behavioral health support services. Their schools therefore become the hub of support they can receive, and many of these schools need their AEA to provide the only formal support in their surroundings. Some of these families are forced to move to urban areas of the state just so they can get the help that they need for their child. This bill covertly forces many rural Iowans into urban areas, which is NOT what your constituents want.

Name: Kaylynne Christenson

Comment: As an educator in Iowa since 1993, I ask that you vote NO on any bills, including amendments, that will result in changes to the Area Education Agencies at this time. I know firsthand the benefits the AEA systems provide as a teacher, an instructional coach, a parent, and now as an AEA employee. Should this legislation pass, I will not be returning to the classroom as I would not want to be a teacher in a system without the support and resources provided by AEAs. At this time, I urge you to slow down this process and engage in a comprehensive review of the AEA system that encompasses the viewpoints of a wide range of all stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, additional staff, administrators, AEA staff from all areas, and legislators. Do not rely on a small hand selected group and a commissioned report with skewed and misleading data. You have been elected to represent the will of the people. Please engage in the necessary conversations to hear those voices. While improvements can be made to the AEA, just as improvements can be made in any organization, that does not mean they need to be decimated to this degree. Making this hasty decision will have a devastating impact on our students and education system as a whole. Kaylynne Christenson Madrid, IA

Name: Amanda Freese

Comment: While I can appreciate the House of Representatives trying to address the concerns with the original bill, this new bill still falls significantly short. Again, I ask what are the specific concerns being addressed through this proposed legislation? The AEAs were designed to not only provide special education services, but to also leverage school districts buying power for media services, provide high quality and affordable professional development and provide supports to teachers, administrators and families to ensure all students, regardless of where they live have access to high quality materials, resources and ultimately an education. The fee for service model will have an adverse impact on such supports. This is another NO vote. I remember in my preservice training days to become a teacher, one of the pieces of Iowa that made it such a successful model for other states was local control and Area Education Agencies. This bill removes both of those by first giving control to the states Department of Education and significantly reducing the effectiveness of AEAs. In one breath we hear our governor lamenting test scores and bemoaning our AEAs. In the next, she is touting literacy instruction based in the science of reading and encouraging training in LETRS through a forprofit business. The truth is, our AEAs have already been providing that same training plus inperson implementation support for a number of years. Their cost to districts is significantly lower than the \$9.2 million price tag being floated around for the other option. Instead of this rushed overhaul (and overreach), do the right thing. Stick to what you knew was wrong the first time. Set up a study to define specific areas of concerns for individual AEAs to address as improvements are needed. You have the ability to be the voice of reason. While this new bill addresses some initial concerns with the first bill, it still falls

short in assuring equitable educational opportunities for all students in Iowa. Supporting the important programs of the AEAs fully will not only benefit our students, it also will help districts recruit and retain teachers. Please vote no.

Name: Peggy Leggett

Comment: I am vehemently opposed to this bill. You KNOW this bill is NOT good for Iowa students or schools. There have not been enough discussions with a broader range of experts in the field of primary and secondary education and psychology to move this forward. Much more time is needed to consider both the potential financial impact and service reductions, ESPECIALLY in the services to our smaller, rural based schools, before this moves forward. The decision making components of this proposal should NOT be center in Des Moines, where the needs of the majority of the smaller schools are not clearly understood. I ask you to vote no on this bill as it now stands. The education and needs of our most vulnerable population, the children of Iowa, are at stake!

Name: Mary Baldridge

Comment: This bill solves very little in improving student achievement. It continues to transition more power to the Dept. of Ed. and create more bureaucracy. The task force doesn't even consist of members of the educational community, and the AEAs are already accredited by the DE. There's no evidence that the outcome will be improved services for students or districts. What a mess. This bill should not pass the House.

Name: Amy Monahan

Comment: Please consider voting against this bill until further studies and research has been completed. I feel like a committee of educators, aea employees, families and government education officials can all work together to make a bill that would benefit the children and staff it affects. We need to make sure that the children and the schools have the resources they need to help the kids which should be first and foremost priority!!

Name: Julie Honan

Comment: This Iowa constituent and voter wants you to OPPOSE HSB 713. You are moving WAY too fast to appease one person. You are making a decision that will negatively impact the future of Iowa education. 1. Before dismantling an integrated AEA structure in just a few months, establish a plan to do an independent, expertled evaluation on areas of strengths and weaknesses. 2. The sole power for education should not be provided to the director of the Department of Ed, Makenzie Snow, who was hired in June 2023 from Virginia. 3. Do not remove access to media services. There is no way the rural districts across IA are going to be able to afford what AEA has provided for a minimal cost. 4. Ensure that AEA's are still allowed to provide Crisis Intervention Services and continue to fill the critical need in mental health care (For example Perry, IA)5. Make sure that they have funding plans in place with transparency. The AEA is designed to create more affordable access to timely care compared to private companies 6. Lastly, you can share your concern with the SLP, OT, PT, and psych services you might receive under this bill. Do we want highly qualified, caring community members to serve our districts or a teletherapist from NY? We do not want our specialized staff to leave our state for opportunities that are more stable. We also want our general education staff to have the support necessary for ALL of their students. Please read every single one of these comments and take data on who agrees and disagrees with the bill that you are presenting and vote accordingly.

Name: Julie Williams

Comment: Please vote no to this bill. Schools do not want control in DeMoines and providing a fee for service model will jeopardize the quality of services that AEAs are known to provide. Lets get all stakeholders involved and take the time to make this right!

Name: Lanny MacCleary

Comment: I never understand why these actions aren't exposed for what they are. Being bought off by companies pushing a product to further your own political careers. The people have spoken, the educators have spoken, the experts have spoken, yet you're still ramming this through. It's not about kids education, it's about keeping you in power so you can enrich yourselves. Thoughts and prayers.

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Name: Michelle Nystel

Comment: I kindly ask that you consider slowing the AEA bill down. If changes are needed, time needs to be spent seriously analyzing all of the facts. bring all players to the table and discuss long time repercussions of what is being proposed. I dont think anyone is objecting to changes but we are opposed to such drastic changes in such a short matter of time.

Name: Emily Koson

Comment: It is imperative that you vote NO! Please listen to Iowans!!! There is absolutely no support and this would be the downfall of our education. How does this help our special Ed students? It doesnt. Vote NO until a comprehensive proper study has been completed.

Name: Chris Maury

Comment: As a republican, I oppose this bill. Im having a difficult time growing central government in one bill then trying to shrink it in another. There is absolutely zero reason to take away boots on the ground across the state and throw more oversight in an office building in downtown DSM. The Iowa Dept of Ed has had oversight for how long, yet the problems lie within the AEA? Where has been the IED this whole time? In any organization, the problem generally doesnt lie within the lower levels, but rather the leadership. In this case, the leadership has always been the IDE. The best way to compound the problem is by adding more captains to the failed ship. Additionally, the desired model has been in place in DSM public schools, yet the performance data isnt exceeding AEA served areas. I ask you to think long and hard about what you may be voting in favor for and understand the kids, families and schools will be greatly impacted. Unless you can show or demonstrate to me, with proof, that any of this proposed legislation will create a benefit, then what youre doing will be nothing short of a gamble with an increase in legal related consequences.

Name: Jaci Jarmes

Comment: I appreciate the desire to do what is best for Iowa's kids. I do not believe there is anyone in our great state that does not want our kids to be successful. I have been an Iowa educator for over 30 years. I have advanced degrees in education and have extensive experience in serving student's with disabilities. I wish it was as easy as passing legislation and changing how the money is distributed. However, it is not. Please talk to the educators in the state. We do not support this bill. We do not feel like we are being heard. Let us share the data that shows how hard our student's and teacher's are working. We are the experts in the field. Please kill this bill. It is not good for Iowa's kids.

Name: Carie Masters

Comment: This bill does not support ALL students, ALL schools, ALL families and ALL

communities. This bill DOES NOT improve student improvement. This bill DOES NOT support having the BEST resources for our schools ALL DAY, EVERY DAY! When will our legislators put CHILDREN FIRST? When will ALL STAKEHOLDERS be involved to support what is BEST for children of IOWA? What happened to local control for our school districts? All CHILDREN need equity of services in Iowa. An unselfish person thinks about what is good for other people, not just about their own advantage. Please be unselfish for our children. An unselfish legislator would ask themselves What CAN I DO to support ALL students? And the clear response would be to VOTE NO!

Name: Teresa Paulson

Comment: The original purpose behind this legislation was supposedly to better support students with disabilities and improve student success. It is extremely unclear how any of the changes proposed will improve outcomes and close gaps for students or be more cost effective or efficient. The process needs to be put on hold until a thorough review is done of the ENTIRE education system. This task force needs to be bipartisan to evaluate and create a concise plan as how to implement any changes needed so there is less impact on the schools, teachers, and most importantly the students. Keeping the systems the same for one year during this study will increase the probability we won't make the situation for our students worse. Please vote NO on this bill. You have the power to do this...just because the governor wants this, does not mean you have to do this. LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE OF IOWA!!!!

Name: Cheryl Brewer

Comment: Please vote NO! Slow this down, bring everyone to the table and complete a comprehensive review! Please do this for the sake of our children and educators!

Name: Bob Grell

Comment: This is not a bill that supports our kids/students in Iowa. We need more funding for education, not less, and definitely not limited for students with challenges. I will be checking who votes "Yes" for this, and I assure you, that I'll make people aware of your vote, and you will not get mine.

Name: Jacqueline Thomsen

Comment: Vote No. Vote NoVote No

Name: Michelle Marshall

Comment: Keep working through this. Be thoughtful and ask yourself how this is going to help our kids have better outcomes. What problems are being fixed with this bill? This is our future take your time and make the best decisions you can.

Name: Taylor Baumgartner

Comment: Please vote no to this amended bill. There is no need to rush this level of change with the little data available to justify any change.

Name: Diane Hoskinson

Comment: I respectfully request that you table any action on the AEA Bill under consideration or simply VOTE NO. This Bill is NOT in the best interest of our children and why would you vote for something that will cost our schools and public more in the long run and marginalize special education students who deserve access to the services that AEAs currently provide based on each individual's needs. Take a step back and begin a more in-depth collaboration with ALL stakeholders including AEAs, schools, and parents specifically. I firmly believe the current Bill needs to slow down and a better structure and failsafe plan be brought out of the collaborative efforts of ALL stakeholders!!

Name: William Soesbe

Comment: Be the voice of the people and vote NO to the AEA bill. People did not ask for this nor do they want it. In addition, this bill is being rushed and appears to be a solution looking for a problem. It is not good for our children and school systems. Slow the process down. Listen to the people. Then act. In the meantime, vote NO.

Name: Robyn Willock

Comment: Thank you to those who have listened for understanding; however, this HSB713 Bill does not reflect the best interests of all Iowa stakeholders, most importantly, the students and educators. I encourage you all to vote No to this bill. A bipartisan committee created the AEA system providing equal access to services and opportunities for all Iowa children, regardless of zipcode, through economyofscale. AEAs have become the foundation of Iowas educational structure that has withstood six governorships including both parties, spanning fifty years. This is an educational structural system that is admired, many states aspire to emulate, and have studied. At minimum, time needs to be taken for a bipartisan committee of Iowa stakeholders including teachers, district administrators, AEA professionals, parents, students, and legislators to collect the correct empirical data with integrity over one school year. In that time, any problems can be more accurately defined with objective information used to address those defined problems, and have an informed decisionmaking process for proposed revisions. Many support services are secondnature to caring professionals, who are also community members, and have not been defined or recorded through a fee for service lens. Much additional time is currently provided to assist, coach, model, and listen to teachers and parents. The high number of new and temporarily certified teachers serving a multitude of student needs often have a high turnover rate. AEA professionals are frequently accessible for these needs, typically at all hours, often on nights and weekends as well, because they are part of the community. These services are beyond any contract for fee and absolutely have never been budgeted for. In attempting to over monetize every act of caring or serving, all parties will suffer, most of all, the children and the future of our state. This legislation deserves at least one year of conscious review of credible data before legislators make hurried highrigor decisions and dismantle fifty years of locally supported structure that will impact thousands of lives and our states future for decades to come. Financially, it does not make sense to pay more money for fewer services, which is exactly what this bill proposes.

Name: Mackenzie Jenness

Comment: I am writing to you to please oppose this bill. I do not feel that the appropriate time has been put into this bill and considering what is best for ALL not just some. This is not something that should be taken lightly and could have disastrous consequences if push through without taking the appropriate time and involving those that have the knowledge and education to construct an appropriate plan of action.

Name: Amy Kading

Comment: Vote NO on HSB 713. Please listen to Iowans. This bill diminisheslocal control and voice. It reduces equity for rural students and districts.

Name: Laura Heitritter

Comment: I am a registered Republican. I oppose this bill. This bill will not improve educational outcomes for kids served in special education. Please slow down and invite Iowa's educators to thoroughly review the AEAs.

Name: Amanda Starr

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. Although I appreciate the amendment and listening to some concerns this is not a comprehensive solution to the concerns that have been discussed by constituents. This is a decision that needs to be considered and discussed. It would be better suited to examine data and how improvements and efficiencies can be made within the AEA. Please listen to your community,

educators, and families. There is overwhelming concern and opposition of this bill as it has been written and amended.

Name: Rachel Rawlinson

Comment: I am writing on my lunch break to ask you to PLEASE OPPOSE this bill impacting the AEAs of Iowa. I dont have much time on this lunch break before I head back to working with kids as a speechlanguage pathologist, so I will keep it brief. The revised bill still puts control of the AEAs with the Department of Education, which is headed by someone with zero education experience who has no understanding of special education whatsoever. Any control placed with the school boards is also questionable, as there is no guarantee school board members have education experience, let alone any knowledge of the complexities of special education. The AEAs have leaders with the experience, expertise, and training necessary to lead educators who are also skilled and require ongoing training and support. Im very concerned about the impact this will have on schools and students. A fee for service model is also still included in the bill. This model removes continuity of care for students across the continuum of education birth through 21 and across all Iowa counties and districts. I have worked and raised kids in states with similar models, and the inconsistency of services available between districts and even schools is jarring and even harmful to special education students. Many of the services from private providers end up being virtual, if the districts can even afford them at all. Theyre often exorbitantly priced. I am, once again, concerned about the impact on schools and students. There are many other points Id like to make, but I do not have time. Please stand in opposition to this bill. It will have resounding negative implications across the state for nearly every family in Iowa. I also do not want to raise my kids in a place where lawmakers dont listen to their constituents. The public outcry has been resounding on this matter. Please stop this bill.

Name: Tracy Craig

Comment: Please say NO to this bill. Rural schools cannot afford to lose more. We need more thought before passing such a dramatic bill to affect our children again. We already are denying them lunches this summer what more do we want to take from children?

Name: Teran Buettell

Comment: Here we go again. This is getting tiresome. The Senate Education Committee meeting last night made it patently obvious that there has not been adequate time or depth of inquiry to proceed with such sweeping changes as those proposed by the governor, or subsequently proposed amendments. Please stop. Take a step back. This is a major systems change. It is indefensible to throw it together in a matter of weeks. If you feel you must do something, other than trusting the existing stakeholders to collaborate to problemsolve, then draft legislation to create an independent commission to examine all facets of this complex issue, with ample representation from ALL stakeholders, culminating in a proposed solution. Facts, data, and overwhelming evidence of the fallacy of the Guidehouse report have been shared widely. Arent you tired of the onslaught of emails? You were elected by the people of Iowa to represent the people of Iowa, not the governor, and the people have spoken loudly and clearly on this issue. They do NOT want this legislation. Have you ever received so many emails on an issue? Or seen the turnout at town halls and legislative forums? Are you listening? Remember that, in the end, the people will speak. If you dont listen, the speaking will done through the ballot box. Please honor your commitment as a public servant and do what you know is right.

Name: Amanda Amanda

Comment: Please vote NO. The mental health services provided to our students through AEA is so valuable and helpful.

Name: Bridget Castelluccio

Comment: This bill needs to have a NO vote so that ALL stakeholders can come to the table to look at this and do a comprehensive review. It needs a task force and study BEFORE there is a bill passed. There are many facets to AEAs that need to be evaluated. Our students and families deserve only the best. Rushing through this process will leave inequities and students left behind. Listen to the majority of the constituents and pause this process and create a task force for further study.

Name: Tracy Weber

Comment: Please vote against this bill. Giving control to the state Department of Education will only cause new problems. Please take the time to learn what needs to be improved without dismantling the entire system. Do not make rash decisions that will hurt our students for years.

Name: Julie McCarty

Comment: Please vote no. There's too much at stake. I've seen no evidence that proposed AEA changes will positively impact special education students, families or schools.

Name: Glen Rogers

Comment: Please vote no on this rushed bill. If you truly care about the children of Iowa you will take longer than the shelf life of a loaf of bread to completely dismantle and overhaul a support system that has served them for over 50 years. Removing critical supports in fields such as computer science education where Iowa wants to lead the nation will hurt Iowas economy and tax base. Education is an easy investment for the future, and this short sighted plan will do nothing but cause future shortfalls in the great state of Iowa!

Name: Susan Olesen

Comment: Iowans have spoken clearly. They are not opposed to AEAs being studied, but the fake study done by an outofstate consultant to support what the governor wants to do is not a study. It's political nonsense. You represent the people of Iowa, not the Governor. I support the plan laid out by Dave Tilly. He suggests this, "I would like to propose the creation of an independent bipartisan commission to comprehensively study AEAs over the next year and make recommendations for improvement. This commission should be created by statute this session, and the commission should propose a bill to enact their recommendations, due by January 1, 2025. The services of the Legislative Service Agency should be made available to the commission to assist in drafting their bill. Because of the trust issues that have been generated by this years bills, I would propose that this commission be comprised solely of Iowans and all contractors employed by the commission be Iowans. The commission should not be run by the Governors office, the Legislature, the Iowa Department of Education nor the AEAs though these groups should all be represented on the commission. The commission should be cochaired with one Republican and one Democrat cochair and I would propose a budget of \$750,000. I would further recommend that these cochaurs be sitting or recently retired School Superintendents with many years of training and experience. The commission budget would be used strictly to hire Iowabased experts to gather data and answer questions posed by the study and to run comprehensive community forums to engage Iowans on their perspectives on AEA improvement. Commission leadership should hire or appoint leaders of workgroups that might complete their work simultaneously, so the deadline can be met. Workgroups should include but not be limited to: Finance Governance Structures AEA Oversight Services AEAs should provide in 2024 i.e., a review of AEA Standards Districts satisfaction with, and role in guiding AEA services Parental, student and community involvement in guiding AEA services How to raise SPED student achievement across the state Thank you for your consideration.

Name: Annette Clarahan

Comment: This bill would be harmful for OUR kids. If OUR kids truly matter, take the time to do a bipartisan study of the whole educational system from the classroom to AEA supports to the Director of the Dept. of Education. A Feasibility Study should occur, to distinguish if schools and the AEA's could sustain with the funds they will be receiving. I've always had the understanding that when you are elected to office you represent your constituents. We're better than this. Our future generation is listening.

Name: Joan Amick

Comment: As you consider the revised bills on education, here is another thing to consider. The funding of public education has not kept up with the cost of living for many years and the continued cutting of AEA funding has been so significant. Yet you are expecting more and more from staff. If you all really care about the education of our children in Iowa, think about investing in the children. 2.5% increase, which has been proposed for next year, does not keep up with the cost of living, once again. If you are concerned about the teacher shortages, taking away the supports they receive on a daily basis from the AEA's does not help. Their class sizes get bigger in many schools because of funding shortages. Make education a priority in Iowa once again! We are going to drive so many young professional people out of this state if we continue to go down this path!

Name: Amy Knupp

Comment: Please vote no on this amended bill. Although some changes have been made, there has been no consulting with the people who provide these services nor the people who access these services. The Iowa people have told you no, please listen to them. Slow this down and give opportunity to those who are in the system and using the system to have a voice. Thank you.

Name: Chad Wolfensperger

Comment: In a 2016 lawsuit the AEA was forced into serving kids with disabilities that were below their peers by a grade level. Before this a parents paid for testing and tutoring because a child would have to be several grade levels below their peers before help was offered from the AEA. 50 years of scientific research has proven a way to teach Dyslexic kids a way to read and this works for every student. It is taking an introduction of a bill that should be passed but shouldn't need to be to get the right reading programs for kids. It has taken the AEA to be on the hot seat to finally get my child who has been under an IEP since 2014 help. Unfortunately that help has come too late, as a 10th grader he, this month, gets to be taught 3rd grade reading, that is right as a 10th grader. Many parents I have talked to have had these experiences it is not isolated had have had to continue to fight. 9 people over seeing 9 agencies and every agencies is different there is no uniformity. What is the same is the Extravagant salaries of those 9 people at and over 300,000 dollars. And what a nice building the Central Rivers AEA purchased and has to maintain. Our school just installed air conditioning in our 70 year old building and only because of the ESSER funds we received over covid. Everyone should be ashamed of the children being left behind and the extravagant budget the AEA has. As a school board member I don't appreciate not having a choice where our funds go or being able to have accountability from the AEA for our money. Chad Wolfensperger

Name: Corey Rogers

Comment: Vote NO. I implore you to listen to the thousands of Iowans who have asked you to slow down, talk to all stakeholders, and do a year of study before passing legislation that makes irrevocable changes to the AEA system that supports our students and educators. Consider the thousands of services the AEAs provide and investigate if the proposed changes will positively impact Iowans.

Name: Kathy Graeve

Comment: I am opposed to HSB 713. Please vote NO. The AEAs provide services to all

children both public and private schools. This bill is rushed and many gaps exist as it is written. Our childrens education is on the line and Iowans are paying attention.

Name: Anne Volker

Comment: Vote NO! The Governor "poisoned the well" with her lack of transparency, using taxpayer dollars to hire an out of state firm that produced misleading data and did not involve a single Iowa stakeholder. The socalled "problem" has surely not been validated and the socalled "solution" is incredibly shortsighted. What's more, granting power to a political appointee (known for her track record of siphoning public funds for private schools) is just plain dangerous. The entire system of education in Iowa needs to be thoughtfully examined and supported The Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Education Agencies. AEAs welcome a "comprehensive review" with broad stakeholder representation. The only piece of HSB 713 that begins to make sense is the proposal to create a task force. Beyond that, the bill does nothing to meaningful improve upon the original bill The public's trust has been repeatedly and significantly breached by Governor Reynolds. The first step in repairing such a rupture is to work to restore the public's trust a bipartisan stakeholder group commissioned to complete a comprehensive review is one such place to begin repair. Anything short of this is pure negligence. Please protect children with disabilities from becoming political pawns.

Name: Shelly Henderson

Comment: Vote NO to amend the AEA. You can clearly see & hear that Iowans do not want this. Please listen to the people who put you all in office!

Name: Karen Junko

Comment: Please vote no on HSB713. I do appreciate that further thought has been made, but the process still needs to be slowed down. A comprehensive review of the 9 AEAs should be done; that is what most Iowans want. If the bill is moved forward, thousands of students and families throughout Iowa, and especially those in rural Iowa, will be left without resources they desperately need to ensure a Free and Appropriate Education(FAPE).

Name: Jennifer Proctor

Comment: Please vote no.

Name: Howard Rogers

Comment: Vote no

Name: Jeri Baysinger

Comment: PLEASE VOTE NO! This even needing to be said is ridiculous. You need to stop allowing things to be presented and passed quickly by the Gov. own agenda. People CARE in Iowa. Take the time to present upcoming considerations for change. Demonstrate why they are better BEFORE ever considering the change. This is tiring. Some folks dont have time or energy to research it all. For the good of all people needs to be a focus. Key word ALL including hungry children who are NOT obese! Still waiting for several replies from our Governor. Be reasonable, VOTE NO!

Name: Kristin Morales

Comment: Please vote no to HSB 713. This bill is being rushed without input from districts, families, and AEA employees. No Iowans are asking for this bill. Please listen to us and protect the AEAs

Name: Anne Miller

Comment: I urge you to vote no on this bill. AEA services are indispensable. Our AEA system

works. It supports students, parents, teachers and schools as it should in an equitable, cost effective way. As a teacher, I have found the professionalism, expertise and resources provided by our AEA to be critical to doing my job well. Please support our AEA system and vote no on this bill.

Name: Michelle Tressel

Comment: Even though the bill has been amended, it still falls extremely short of what the students in the state of Iowa deserve. The services AEAs provide to children and schools are too important to be under the direction (oversight) of the Iowa Department of Education. The longterm consequences of this amended bill will harm education in the state, especially in rural districts. It will not improve education. Please examine what the issues are, get input from consumers and stakeholders and write a bill that addresses the issues. Don't sacrifice our children's and youth's future for what appears to be some sort of revenge against the AEAs.

Name: Angie Rose

Comment: No amount of money or local control will fix the teacher shortage due to the continuous attacks and claims on Iowa educators. Replacing the workforce with under qualified or qualify through fast track pathways is not in the best interest of all students, especially special education services. What is obviously the most important piece of and hasn't changed in any bill or amendment is moving oversight and decision making to the Director of The Department of Education. This alone is one of the most concerning part of the bill. The lack of stability, proof of an actual plan in place, and questionable qualifications of a Governor appointee to have control. Don't take 4 to 6 weeks to undo 50 years when the reasoning behind it doesn't match the plan of action. Review without a bill and make sure you want to undo something that cannot be reversed when done.

Name: Samantha Sierer

Comment: Please vote no on the AEA bill today. I work for the AEA and this bill does not show any evidence it will improve student outcomes. I fear it will do the opposite and make our services much less efficient to provide, especially with moving local control to the Department of Education. As staff members, we have so many questions about the data that was used for this proposal and also about the sustainability of our jobs. We mostly just want our students to receive the best services they can. Please take time to study our services, involve the AEA staff, school districts, and families we work with before any changes are made.

Name: Michelle Soloth

Comment: I am a registered republican voter and I oppose this bill strongly. My rural school district will be negatively impacted by this bill. I am strongly opposed to giving the state more control as they are not the people in the trenches. Please vote NO on this bill!

Name: Heather Rinderknecht

Comment: Vote NO to this bill! Please listen to the Iowans you represent that overwhelmingly do not support this bill.

Name: Ashton Stafford

Comment: Please vote no on HSB713. This is not what is best for our students. I am concerned about our rural communities and the impact this bill will have on them. I appreciate your recent considerations on this and urge you to take more time to conduct a comprehensive review of each of the nine AEAs across the state, before making such a critical decision with egregious consequences.

Name: Jina Wood

PLEASE take the time to read all of these comments and vote NO on this bill. This is

Comment: not in the best interest of Iowa families and schools!!

Name: Tammie Epperson

Comment: I respectfully ask you to vote NO on the AEA bill. This bill is destructive to Iowa children, families, & education professionals. Please listen to the majority of Iowans. Very few support this bill. Vote NO. Thank you

Name: Heather Smith

Comment: Vote NO. Listen to the people of Iowa. Study the AEA.NO DE control.Keep local control with AEA boards!

Name: Gina Dob

Comment: I appreciate your work on this bill. Please continue to work with stakeholders to include parents, students, and professionals in the field to make this a much better bill. Specifically, ensure Crisis Intervention Services, Operational Sharing, and Media for all students. Centralizing the power with the DOE does not help and will cause more issues than currently exist. Vote no and keep working on this, please.

Name: Gina Iverson

Comment: Vote NO! Extensive data shared through your inbox, forums, conversations, and calls emphasizes the importance of conducting a thorough review before implementing this change. The repercussions for rural communities are significant, as the loss of local control is a step backward. The bill lacks clarity on how these alterations will positively affect outcomes for students with disabilities. I urge you to heed the voices of the people of Iowa and cast your vote in opposition, by voting NO.

Name: Amber Bridge

Comment: Please vote no on this issue. I have serious concerns about the supports my rural schools will be able to receive in terms of access to materials to support learning in the classroom. Please speak to educators in your district before you vote on this bill.

Name: Nancy Lindgren

Comment: PLEASE vote NO for this bill. Iowans are NOT ASKING FOR THIS! As a farmer, mother and community member, I oppose this bill. I live in rural Iowa and this bill will hurt our rural school. I feel that the AEA is a necessary resource for our community because small schools cannot afford to pay for what the AEA provides to our district. Why would you remove that? PLEASE Do not vote for this bill. There needs to be more research done and the consequences that occur because of this bill cannot be undone!

Name: Sasha Mudlaff

Comment: I would ask you to please vote NO for this ammended bill. The services that the AEA provides are essential especially to the more rural schools but even those close to the city benefit from their excellent support they provide especially during crisis response situations.

Name: Kris C

Comment: Please vote no on HSB713 or at the very least just vote to form the task force and sit down with all the stakeholders (superintendents, teachers, AEA administrators, AEA staff and parents) to come up with a plan that can actually help close the gap between general ed and special ed students. I have 2 main problems with this bill, the lack of funding for media services, these services are an intricate form of support for teachers and the education of all students. Secondly, taking control away from local schools and putting it in the hands of the Director of Education whom does not have an education background, is not from Iowa, has moved job to job in less than 18 months and is the 4 Director of Ed in as many years. This is a problem that should be

looked at, why is there so much turnover in that position and why is there not a mandatory Masters of Education degree required for such an important position. Again I ask that you continue to listen to Iowan's and slow down the process and focus on a task for to actually address the gap problem. Thank you.

Name: Laura Leonard

Comment: I am against this bill. This will negatively impact every student and teacher across the state.

Name: Lori Rich

Comment: I have a question about why some Republicans are blocking constituents emails? We who work in the field have given you all the information you've needed. But yet you still do not listen, nor do you take the information into consideration. We have hired you to represent us not Governor Reynolds.

Name: Kyra Wilcox-Conley

Comment: Please vote no to this bill. There are too many unanswered questions, too much inaccurate data driving the bill, and no accountability built in to the DE oversight (How will outcomes for students with disabilities be monitored under this new system? What if they don't improve? How will the DE take responsibility?) DE, AEAs, and schools all play a part in special education and general education. Please search for an answer that focuses on collaboration among these three, not one that divides and conquers.

Name: Rob Brookhart

Comment: Please vote NO to HSB 713, as it fails to remedy the fundamental flaws of the original legislation or amendments. Further study, by an independent entity with broad stakeholder input, is needed before making changes that will impact a generation of Iowa children. Enacting this will cause years of educational loss for our students, especially for smaller rural districts. The loss of available services can not be quickly created when a need arises without the AEA. Iowa has valued local control and by moving decision making to the Department of Education will reduce the ability to understand the ongoing and changing needs of local schools that local boards have successfully handled in the past. While the flawed report indicate that administrative costs are too high, this will just create even more administrative costs by adding more positions at the Department of Education. Iowa has had a strong tradition of making sure that children, no matter where they live, in both public and accredited private schools have had equal opportunity to the same services and resources. This bill will destroy that opportunity to learn. Iowa loses by rushing this bill without more in depth study. The AEAs provide so many supports and services and work in harmony that quickly eliminating or diminishing any part will cause unintended consequences for the whole state educational network. Our children deserve better than this!!

Name: Lori Miller

Comment: Please vote NO to the amendment of the AEA bill. This will severely hurt our school systems and only cost more to hire the positions AEA already provides effectively.

Name: Kristine Anderson

Comment: Please vote "NO" on this amended version of the proposed gutting of AEAs and services to our children and school district. I have read the report from Guidehouse which is a business that has no history or experience with public schools and AEAs in Iowa. Why does any legislator support legislation developed by outofstate "consultants" who have profit as their only motive.....not the best interests of Iowa. Nothing from Guidehouse makes sense when it comes to Iowa...to education...to special needs children....or our AEAs. What is the exact problem that Kim Reynolds is attempting to solve? There is a strong accountability system in place for our AEAs.

What are we missing when it comes to holding AEAs accountable? I am deeply concerned by this power grab by Kim Reynolds and her unqualified Director of the Iowa Department of Education. The Director has NO experience or expertise with Iowa's public schools or AEAs. She has already demonstrated her incompetence over the Banned Books debacle. Her incompetence would make AEAs and public education even worse! If Reynolds and you are truly interested in improving the quality of education for our special needs students, do the following: 1. Increase the funding for prek12 public schools so schools have the resources needed to hire more teachers and paraeducators, reduce class size, and provide more services to special needs students in the classroom. 2. Follow the law, and notify local school districts of the funding they will receive for the 202425 school year. 3. Convene a study committee that includes parents, students, classroom teachers, special education teachers, support personnel, AEA personnel, Administrators, and other stakeholders to first identify issues and problems that may exist and then outline solutions. Thank you for your careful consideration of this legislation. Thank you for putting the interests of special needs students and Iowa first.

Name: Marc Peter

Comment: I strongly oppose this bill and ask you all to please vote NO. This bill will be a terrible disservice to our most vulnerable children, puts rural school districts at an incredible disadvantage, removes local control and lays it in the hands of a Governor appointed Director that is not even mandated to be a professional educator. Let's leave special education guidance and assistance to the professional educators that are experts in their fields. A yes vote by any of my legislative representatives will be an automatic no vote from myself at reelection time.

Name: Hilary Foster

Comment: The original drive behind this legislation is purportedly to better support students with disabilities. This is an unsubstantiated and a rather bold claim. In fact, it is unclear how any of these changes will improve outcomes and close gaps for students with disabilities, or address federal compliance concerns. We need to slow down this process. Even more than is proposed with this amendment. We need to study this more before moving forward, and remove predetermined outcomes. Without knowing the root of the problem(s) the legislature should be unable to determine what needs to be done. Keeping everything the same for one year, increases the likelihood that we don't make matters worse for our students, families, and schools. This bill devalues local control. While districts get to decide how to use the special education and education services funding, the Iowa Department of Education still has overreach. Oversight in Des Moines will also make things worse and slow down the process(es). I can tell you that personally after the realignment bill passes. Constituents are not happy with the new State websites. It's nearly impossible to reach anyone by phone, and some auto responses to webmail and email tell people it could be 30 days before they get a response. That's unacceptable, especially when we are talking about children needing necessary services. It isn't making the desired outcomes a reality, and has only made frustrations with our state government and response times worse. The AEAs are open to improvement opportunities, but we must be thoughtful in our approach. We would recommend a review of the AEAs be conducted, with representatives such as superintendents, parents, AEA staff, and other key stakeholders at the table, utilizing the data that is accurate.

Name: Meredith Hughes Stiles

Comment: Your constituents have spoken loud and clear. It's time to listen to those you represent. The bill's failure to adequately fund special education services places a disproportionate burden on schools, jeopardizing the quality of support that students with special needs receive. This not only affects the students but also places additional strain on teachers and staff responsible for their care. The proposed bill not only affects students and teachers but also has severe implications for employment. Each AEA will reduce many positions, creating a ripple effect of economic hardship

and increased unemployment in the education sector. I appreciate the crucial role that teachers play in shaping the future of our children. The bill's elimination of professional learning opportunities and content area consultants directly impacts educators' abilities to enhance their teaching methods and support struggling learners effectively. Schools will have inadequate funding to replace the services that are being lost. As many of our mid-sized and smaller rural districts begin reviewing the money that is currently flowing through their district to the AEA, they're finding that those funds fall dramatically short of what would be needed to replace the services being lost. I can't stress enough that the repercussions of this bill extend beyond the classroom, affecting entire communities, and an entire generation of students. Education is an investment in the future of our society. The proposed bill, by undermining the quality of education and support services, jeopardizes the future success and wellbeing of our children. It is imperative to consider the long-term consequences and work towards a solution that prioritizes the needs of our students, families, and educators. Tens of thousands of Iowans, including the vast majority of school superintendents, have shown up at legislative forums, written emails, shared public comments, signed petitions and met with legislators one-on-one to voice strong opposition to this legislation. It is clear that schools, and their families, have not requested this change. The groups named below registered opposed to the initial bill. We believe this sends a strong message to the Iowa legislature that these changes are not welcomed by school districts or other key AEA stakeholders: American Academy of Pediatrics Disability Rights Iowa Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council Rural School Advocates of Iowa Iowa Speech and Language Association Iowa Occupational Therapy Association Autism Speaks Professional Educators of Iowa Iowa School Counselors Association Iowa School Psychologists Association Iowa School Social Work Association Episcopal Diocese of Iowa Iowa Catholic Conference AFSCME Iowa Council Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement Action Fund*among others. The \$529 million figure that the Governor's office continually uses to describe the total cost of the AEA system does not match our calculations. However, despite repeated attempts to clarify, we have not received a response from her personnel. Additionally, it is false and misleading to say that the AEA system has no transparency or accountability. Providing inaccurate information to sell a disastrous bill is shameful, regardless of political affiliation. I urge you to vote NO and continue to amend, by including those who will ultimately be impacted most educators, AEAs, and families.

Name: Nicole Juranek

Comment: no

Name: Katherine Denniston

Comment: Please include all stakeholders, especially parents in the decision making process. This is about kids not money! Pump the brakes, please vote no and gather more information.

Name: Makenna Browning

Comment: Please listen to the thousands of voices that are asking this bill to be stopped. We will be doing our children a huge disservice by allowing this to move forward. So much more research and investigation needs to happen, and it is not something that can be rushed. For our children to have the best future and opportunities, we need to set them up for success by providing the support and resources they DESERVE. And no matter how you try to swing this bill, it is not supportive of our kids. Please think of our children first.

Name: Kristine Anderson

Comment: Please vote "NO" on this amended version of the proposed gutting of AEAs and services to our children and school district. I have read the report from Guidehouse which is a business that has no history or experience with public schools and AEAs in Iowa. Why does any legislator support legislation developed by out-of-state

"consultants" who have profit as their only motive.....not the best interests of Iowa. Nothing from Guidehouse makes sense when it comes to Iowa...to education....to special needs children....or our AEAs. What is the exact problem that Kim Reynolds is attempting to solve? There is a strong accountability system in place for our AEAs. What are we missing when it comes to holding AEAs accountable?I am deeply concerned by this power grab by Kim Reynolds and her unqualified Director of the Iowa Department of Education. The Director has NO experience or expertise with Iowa's public schools or AEAs. She has already demonstrated her incompetence over the Banned Books debacle. Her incompetence would make AEAs and public education even worse!If Reynolds and you are truly interested in improving the quality of education for our special needs students, do the following: 1. Increase the funding for prek12 public schools so schools have the resources needed to hire more teachers and paraeducators, reduce class size, and provide more services to special needs students in the classroom.2. Follow the law, and notify local school districts of the funding they will receive for the 202425 school year.3. Convene a study committee that includes parents, students, classroom teachers, special education teachers, support personnel, AEA personnel, Administrators, and other stakeholders to first identify issues and problems that may exist and then outline solutions. Thank you for your careful consideration of this legislation. Thank you for putting the interests of special needs students and Iowa first.

Name: Deanna Etherington

Comment: Please vote no to this bill and all amendments. The AEA provides a wide range of services to the vast majority of Iowa schoolchildren, both public and private. The majority of Iowans oppose this bill, including almost everyone I know with a child or grandchild in school. If any portions of this bill are passed, it will have broadranging and negative implications for Iowa schools of all sizes, but especially for small and medium-sized schools in Iowa. AEAs provide many efficient and effective services that the majority of schools will not be able to afford or replicate, even when given flowthrough money. This bill is moving way too fast for the devastating outcomes it will likely cause. If this is an attempt to improve AEAs, then please do a yearlong study with all parties impacted involved administrators, students, teachers, AEA administration and staff, parents, and citizens. This impacts a great number of Iowans.

Name: Leah Olson

Comment: Please vote no to this revised bill. While I appreciate the effort to make changes to the original bill, this legislation will leave rural schools without the resources and supports they desperately need. How will these changes improve outcomes for special education students, which is what the governor stated needed to change. Please instead take time to involve all stakeholders in looking at current practices, data and evaluating what changes are needed to improve the educational system.

Name: Savannah Nelson

Comment: I am writing to let you know this bill is not good for Iowa students or schools. There has not been enough discussions with wide ranges of stakeholders to move this forward. There needs to be more time and consideration put into potential financial impact and service ramifications. The decision making should NOT be centralized in Des Moines. We do not need anyone without a good history or background in school education making decisions for these types of organizations. Someone without any political background needs to be making decisions influencing the education system.

Name: Mariah Tousley

Comment: Please vote no. I am writing on my lunch break as a parent of two children who have benefited from both general and special education services through the AEA. I do not see how this bill will be tied to improving educational outcomes. Please protect children like mine by ensuring that any legislation passed will, without a doubt, have

a positive outcome. Iowans do not want this bill, but they do want legislators who listen to their needs and concerns.

Name: Monica Harden

Comment: I am asking that you please reject and end this amended bill and form a bipartisan committee with educators, the department of education, AEAs and LEAs to review Special Ed Student Outcomes and the efficiencies of the AEAs. Please give us time to make the system the best it can be, and look at multiple sources of data on student outcomes. I would ask that you please listen to your constituents on this bill! I am writing to you as a schoolbased occupational therapist of 25 years that works for the AEA. I believe this bill will hurt Iowa kids and schoolbased occupational therapy practitioners in this state. Childhood outcomes will decrease as we move from an inclusive and participation based evidence based practice within a child's Least Restrictive Environment to a model of exclusion. I can assure you that as a schoolbased OT in Iowa there are other states that envy our model of practice. We get asked to speak all over the country to share our model of inclusion and that students are general education students first! I lend out specialized assistive technology equipment from my AEAs daily so that districts can trial expensive equipment and the team can make an informed databased decision on if the equipment helps with student outcomes. If districts are allowed to choose private providers that are unfamiliar and untrained in schoolbased practice, IDEA law and our inclusion model we will see therapy services go back 30 years where children were excluded from their peers, not included like they are now. Most likely due to the staff shortage that already exists, we may have private companies from outside of the state providing telehealth virtual services for our rural districts. Currently our AEA system provides equity of schoolbased services across the entire state, in big cities like Cedar Rapids where I live to small towns like Spencer where I'm from. Please consider the changes you are making from AEA local/regional control to giving district choices and how this will hurt Iowa kids with special needs. Thank you for time and consideration and for your service as a senator on the education committee. Monica Harden, SchoolBased Occupational Therapist

Name: Whitney Wolf

Comment: Please vote NO! Iowans do not want this bill, why arent you listening to your constituents who are overwhelmingly opposed to this bill? This will hurt our children, schools and communities! Represent us and vote NO. Iowans deserve better than this bill, our children deserve better.

Name: Julie Barwick

Comment: Please vote no on the amended bill. Time is needed to study the ramifications on this bill. A task force is needed so there are no unintended consequences that will be difficult to fix. Do not fail our learners by making a quick decision.

Name: Joel Gehling

Comment: HSB 713 and HSB 542 are ill conceived and designed to tear apart the AEA system in Iowa. The AEA has been instrumental in providing educational and developmental support to the children of Iowa for decades. This bill would greatly undermine and destroy the great work that the AEAs do. This is another example of services that have been provided in Iowa at a high level that the governor wants to sell out to special interest groups. Education in Iowa is not served by destroying the AEAs to sell out to the lowest bidder. That practice has already destroyed the Medicaid system in Iowa and made care even harder to find for the folks that truly need it. Advancing HSB 713 and HSB 542 will do the same to education and our children will suffer. Instead of tearing apart the AEAs and all of the great work the men and women in AWEAs do, lets support them. Stand up for the children of Iowa and say NO to HSB 713 and HSB 542!

Name: Heidi Farquhar

Comment: Thus bill still needs so much work. You are dismantling a system that already guarantees ALL services to students at no extra cost to the schools. You can not cookie cut IEP services, hence the I stands for individualized! The fee for service will bankrupt our rural districts and then kids will go without services!. I urge you to vote NO on this bill. Do a year review and give this matter the attention it deserves.

Name: Becky Stadlman

Comment: Please vote no on this bill. It does nothing to improve services to out kids, teachers and schools. There should be a task force appointed to study this issue, containing all stakeholders. Only then should improvements be implemented.

Name: Theresa Graeve

Comment: I am a registered Republican who opposes this bill. Please vote no. As a 36 year public servant (now retired) in various positions, serving in 2 school districts and an AEA it is not in the best interest of serving Iowa students. Listen to Iowans who have been reaching out to our Legislators for weeks. Listen to the experts. Please vote no and allow this to pass for now in order to do an in depth study utilizing Iowa experts and those that have worked "boots" on the ground providing these critical services that have and do work. And from personal experience, the DE is not the place to put the "power", as they don't have a great response time. How will the DOE handle all of the intricacies and decision making in order to allow districts and AEAs to provide the services needed in "real time" circumstances? Our children deserve the best. And Iowa was once regarded "Best in the Nation" for its Education.

Name: Yvette Bardole

Comment: I oppose this bill. Please vote no. The changes proposed here would negatively affect rural school districts the most and decrease equity of services across the state.

Name: Jodi Paup

Comment: Please vote NO on this amended bill. These are crucial changes being proposed across our state without spending NEAR enough time to consider the ramifications. What is the hurry? If we truly care about meeting the needs of students and families in Iowa, making improvements will take TIME. This bill will hurt rural schools. Please do whats best for IOWA. We are counting on you to represent us!

Name: Chele Harrison

Comment: Vote NO on this bill. To give the Director of Education the power and control over professional development and evidenced based research is a travesty. AEAs excel in those areas. Why do you ask us to develop professional development and evidenced based strategies, then claim that we don't know what we are doing so now Dr. Snow needs to take over? Very concerning

Name: Catherine Petersen

Comment: Please vote NO to this revised bill. As a parent of public school children in an urban district, and as an educator serving rural students, I recognize that this bill harms districts of any size but especially our rural districts. I have personally experienced many aspects of the value of our AEAs. If efficiencies are to be made, a slower process and a thorough, nonpartisan review is warranted. This is rushed and looks to be politically motivated; this is not in the best interest of Iowa children. Please oppose this bill and give AEAs, and Iowans, the thorough consideration that is warranted.

Name: Cindra Porter

Comment: Please vote NO to this bill. We have many teachers who are overwhelmed with the challenge of teaching in Iowa right now. Taking away the direct, immediate, and comprehensive support of the AEAs in their current model will only make teaching

harder. We should all be concerned that we will lose teachers if this moves forward. I have had teachers comment to me that no pay raise is worth more stress and lack of access to trainings and direct support.

Name: Molly Uhlenhopp

Comment: Please stop this. Slow down. Do not pass any bills this legislative season and complete a study of the AEAs.

Name: M Hackett

Comment: Thank you for the changes you have made to this bill so far. I continue to oppose this bill in its current state. It gives lots of authority and oversight to the head of the Department of Education, who is currently not even an educator. Moving the work of our children and schools to appointed politicians who are farther removed from children and schools is the wrong move and will hurt students and educators in Iowa. I'm also concerned that the proposed AEA task force is set to be appointed by legislators, rather than local stakeholders. I worry this may cause educational issues to become partisan and political. Please work with your districts and AEAs on this bill before moving it forward. This is not currently a good move for Iowa schools.

Name: Deanna Etherington

Comment: Please vote YES to any bill that involves a longterm study (a year or more) of the AEAs and services that involves equal bipartisan representation of AEA staff and administrators, public and nonpublic teachers who heavily use AEA services in ALL areas, parents who utilize services or have utilized them in the past, and Iowa citizens and taxpayers. It should be a study conducted here in Iowa with Iowa representation only, not forprofit companies from out of state. Thank you for listening to your constituents. Most people I know with children or grandchildren in Iowa schools right now are highly concerned about the Senate version of the bill and would welcome a wellthought alternative, particularly one that slows the process down and really examines the potential implications of change. Thank you for all your work on this. This impacts almost ALL Iowa students. Respectfully submitted.