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P.O. Box 1212, Carson City, Nevada 89702

April 13, 2016

To: Indiana Association of Home Educators

**RE: Response to testimony provided to US Commission on Civil Rights Indiana Advisory Committee**

Thank you for requesting our response to testimony regarding Nevada homeschooling and the public schools during a meeting of the US Commission on Civil Rights Indiana Advisory Committee on February 17, 2016.

Contrary to testimony given by Ms. Leslie Hiner (page 98) Nevada public schools do not automatically refer parents of troubled students to a "homeschool expert" in our state. This is a misrepresentation of one relationship that is currently working in NV... A homeschool mom and advocate, turned educational options advocate, gets calls from parents who are looking into homeschooling. These calls are referred out by one school district's "homeschool office"; an office which is not meant for homeschoolers, but merely exists to process Notice of Intents required by law. These students are not always troubled, and homeschooling is not always the right option for the family.

While Nevada homeschoolers enjoy a good relationship with the NV Department of Education we do not have any kind of agreement with the DOE nor the school districts to counsel parents of troubled (expelled) students. However, Nevada Homeschool Network (NHN) is listed on the NV-DOE website as a "resource" for parents considering homeschooling. Additionally, school districts will refer parents to NHN (a statewide organization) or other homeschool support groups in the local community if parents have questions about homeschooling.

To clarify Nevada law; private school enrollment and homeschooling are "exemption" options to NRS 392.040 that compels children between the ages of 7 and 18 to be enrolled in a Nevada public school (or charter school). NV parents who choose to homeschool under NRS 392.070 and 392.700 "take full responsibility for the education of the child" by filing a Notification of Intent to Homeschool and are subject to educational neglect laws, the same as all NV parents. The Homeschool Freedom Bill passed both houses of the NV Legislature unanimously and was signed into law in June, 2007. As a result, homeschooling in Nevada is no longer regulated by the State Board of Education/DOE. Therefore, a Nevada public school may not "transfer a student to homeschooling". Further, it is not NHN's mission to "discourage" parents from homeschooling but rather to educate them about the responsibility of homeschooling and advocate for their right to do so. If they choose to homeschool, we assist them in getting started on the excellent educational option that homeschooling can afford their student.

Lastly, as part of NHN's objective, in 2005 we worked with our state legislature to ensure that these "troubled" youth had expanded options, NOT just homeschooling. We forged paths with charter schools and won the right for expelled students to enroll in these schools as well as expanded options within the public school system through either independent study or distance education, should they be the right fit for the family. Applicable statutes are available upon request. Homeschooling is an education option that is appropriate for some families and the right to homeschool without government oversight is a liberty that NHN has advocated for since 2002.

Submitted by Barbara Dragon (775) 721-9202 and Elissa Wahl (702)241-6170 on behalf of NHN Officers