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Dear Chairman Kiley, Ranking Member Bonamici, and Members of the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education:

I was asked to clarify a statement I made regarding the parents in *Mahmoud v. Taylor*. When asked what recourse those parents had following the school board’s decision not to allow opt-outs, I stated: “they may not have had recourse; democracy would be their recourse.” By “democracy,” I meant the recourse that parents have traditionally had in general disputes over public school curricula: participation in local democratic governance. Public education in the United States has been governed through locally elected school boards since the early nineteenth century, and curricular disagreements have historically been navigated through that process—by electing and replacing the officials who set educational policy. Parents who object to what is being taught in public schools can advocate before their school board, support candidates who share their priorities, and, ultimately, vote out board members whose decisions they oppose.

Montgomery County itself illustrates the point. In the 2024 school board elections—held while the *Mahmoud v. Taylor* litigation was ongoing—all three incumbents up for reelection were defeated. The democratic process produced accountability. That is the sense in which I referred to democracy as the parents’ recourse.

Thank you,
Zalman Rothschild