



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Educate.Advocate and A Voice for Choice Advocacy, Inc. Release Statement Regarding Senate Bill 18 (Pan) - Bill of Rights for Children and Youth in California.

Is Common Sense Kids Action Really Wanting Parents' Input on the Children's Bill of Rights or is it all a Grand Facade?

Multiple Parent Meetings Canceled Without Notification

RIVERSIDE AND MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA, February 15, 2017 - At least 16 meetings to get parent input on the proposed Children's Bill of Rights have been scheduled by *Common Sense Kids Action* (<https://www.cakidscampaign.org/events>), the organization sponsoring Senate Bill 18, but could it be that they don't really want to talk to parents after all? At least four meetings are known to have been canceled, most without notice, giving the distinct impression that *Common Sense Kids Action* never planned them to actually take place. They want to be able to say they organized discussions with parents, but the reality is they don't care about parents, they only care about furthering their agenda – getting the state to spend tens of billions of dollars on child welfare programs that leave the state to determine what is in the best interest of a child over their parents.

For the four known canceled parent meetings, no courtesy email was sent by *Common Sense Kids Action* letting participants know the meetings were canceled.

At least two parents were met by closed doors when they tried to attend the February 11, 2017 San Diego meeting. Michele Rooney, MS, PT of Encinitas added "I planned to attend the California Kids Campaign meeting regarding SB18 at the Webster Head Start in San Diego the moment I heard about it, because I am fully committed to being involved with any legislation or policy regarding children and parental rights. It appears from their failure that the organizers of the Campaign are not committed and vested in speaking with community leaders, stakeholders and parents, as they were a no show on their own meeting, with no indications of the cancellation on their website or social media."

Another parent, Suzanne Lesniowski of Torrance, who was met with confusion at the San Pedro meeting on February 8, 2017, commented "I'm a concerned parent and wanted to learn more about the Children's Bill of Rights so I signed up to attend the San Pedro meeting and when I went to Animal Services / Girl Scouts at the address given during sign up no organizer was there and no one that was there knew anything about the meeting."

Shannon Primer of Oceanside, a parent of a special needs child and educational advocate, who felt she wasted her time in trying to attend the February 9, 2017 San Diego meeting,

shared “as a parent of 4 children, one with special needs, I signed up to attend a meeting to learn more about Senate Bill 18. I was never contacted and then they canceled the meeting without notice. How, as parents, are we supposed to have our voices heard if this group can't follow through with holding meetings? To me it's *Common Sense*. You want parental and voter input you follow through when you set up meetings.”

The Los Angeles Times Editorial Board recently wrote an Op Ed on the Children’s Bill of Rights, describing the bill as “lofty – and troubling.”

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-childrens-bill-of-rights-20170207-story.html>

What is just as lofty and troubling is that *Common Sense Kids Action* is trying to react to the large and increasing voice of angry and upset parents who do not want their rights stripped away and replaced by a government that know best, by pretending to listen to parents concerns at non-existent meetings. There is no brainstorming of “practical solutions to hold our policy makers accountable when it comes to making kids our nation’s top priority” as the *Common Sense Kids Action* website would like you to believe. Their claim that “**We know that parents are their kids' best advocates. We want to hear from you.** Over the next year, Common Sense Kids Action's Parent Organizers are hosting Parent Meetings statewide with parents and children's advocates like you. Input from these parent-led conversations will be used to add important details to the framework of SB 18 that help shape this important vision.” is just a lie.

Don’t be fooled by *Common Sense Kids Action* and Senator Pan saying the coming amendments to SB 18 are based on parental input. The wording of the bill is already decided and will be in the best interest of the government and the *Common Sense Kids Action* agenda, not that of California parents, whose children this bill will directly affect.

The current wording of SB18 can be found here:

http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB18

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