

Homeschoolers React to Obama's Education Demand

Tuesday night in his **State of the Union address** President Obama called on all states to raise their school compulsory attendance age to 18, a move that stirred verbal backlash from homeschoolers.

"So tonight, I am proposing that every state—every state—requires that all students stay in high school until they graduate or turn 18," Obama said on Tuesday night.

The **Home School Legal Defense Association**, or HSLDA, contends that the new age requirements would unnecessarily add to bureaucratic requirements for homeschoolers.

The group argues that parents—not the federal government and certainly not the president—are the ones who should decide how children are educated and when they're ready to graduate from high school.

"There appears to be no limit to the president's desire for power," says Michael Farris, founder and chairman of HSLDA, expressing the shock **homeschoolers** felt at the president's statement. "Car companies, banks, doctors, and now schools and the family. He's gone way too far this time."

State-mandated attendance has not been the historical norm. In 1642, the Massachusetts Bay Colony stipulated that parents provide **religious instruction** for their children. For the next 200 years, most education laws were minimal and focused on family-centered education, giving children the tools to read, write and do arithmetic, helping them understand what it meant to be virtuous citizens, and allowing them to learn a trade.

Ultimately, HSLDA argues, a formulaic and compulsory approach to education fails to instill in children a love of learning

or a quality education.

What say you?