

ND Appropriations Committee Members,

I am a stay-at-home mother with 9 children. I have homeschooled each of my children since they were in pre-school. My oldest is now just beginning High School.

I realize that this bill, as it is currently written, could potentially provide our family with a \$4500 tax credit each year. Yet I stand OPPOSED to HB1281.

Eleven days ago, a committee met to discuss HB1281, but with only one difference: the amount of the tax credit at that time was \$2000 per child rather than the \$500 it is now. After listening to testimony and certainly discussion among the committee, the decision was made to simply edit the bill down to \$500.

I find the words of Horatio Bunce, a simple Tennessee farmer in the 1830's, to mirror my thoughts. Therefore, I will echo them here:

"It is not the amount that I have a problem with. The power to collect and then disburse money at your pleasure is the most dangerous power that can be entrusted to man... If you had the right to give anything, the amount was simply a matter of discretion with you, and you had as much right to give twenty million dollars as twenty thousand dollars. If you have the right to give to one, you have the right to give to all; and, as the Constitution neither defines charity nor stipulates the amount, you are at liberty to give to anything and everything which you may believe, or profess to believe, is a charity, and to any amount you may think proper. You will very easily perceive what a wide door this would open for fraud and corruption and favoritism, on the one hand, and for robbing the people on the other. No, Congress has no right to give to charity. Individual members may give as much of their own money as they please, but they have no right to touch a dollar of the public money for that purpose."

200 years ago, Mr. Bunce spoke in foresight of a government that was full of "fraud, corruption, and favoritism on the one hand, and robbing people on the other". Is this not what we have in America today? The people are robbed so that fraud, corruption, and favoritism may occur!

This bill, I believe, was introduced by people who are honest and desirous of the good of North Dakotans. However, I will again quote Mr. Horatio Bunce, "The man who wields power and misinterprets [the Constitution] is the more dangerous the more honest he is." The Representatives who introduced this bill likely did not see the possible consequences of the government one day using the money in this bill to regulate and restrict the freedom of non-public education. But their honesty and lack of foresight is a danger to school choice in this great state.

As a final point, it is often mistakenly stated that the government is to be a servant of the people. This is not true. For all people are inherently greedy and would destroy themselves in short order. Our elected officials are not to serve the people, but rather to serve the Constitution. Mr. Bunce understood this fact, and directed his comments to the fact that the Constitution does not give the government a right to fund charity.

You, as members of the Congress, have no Constitutional right to give favoritism to homeschoolers, thereby causing fraud, corruption, and robbery.

As a homeschooling mother in rural North Dakota, I ask for a DO NOT PASS decision on HB1281. Thank you.

