



North Dakota Small Organized Schools

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SB 2165 Testimony In Favor
House Education Committee
Representative Owens – Chairman
March 9, 2021

Chairman Owens and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Michael Heilman. I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Small Organized Schools (NDSOS). I represent 154-member school districts of the North Dakota Small Organized Schools. NDSOS stands in support of SB 2165.

All NDSOS member school budgets were impacted by the federal impact aid dollars associated with the COVID pandemic. For some of our schools, this sudden influx of funds caused their carryover balance to exceed current allowable limits forcing schools to act quickly to use these funds. For our smallest schools the current carryover provision of 35% plus \$50,000 is often the budgetary goal. A single large expenditure in any one of these districts would strain their budgets and could seriously jeopardize cash flow.

SB 2165 provides the opportunity for districts to retain impact aid funds and more importantly, affords them the opportunity to gather input from district stakeholders before making decisions on how to best use these dollars. Our school leaders and school boards would prefer to have time for stakeholder input into the best use of funds to benefit their districts taxpayers and the students they serve.

SB 2165 will also allow much needed time for the 94 transition minimum schools to prepare for and budget for potential losses in revenue as transition minimum funding is gradually phased out. NDSOS supports SB 2165.

Chairman Owens and member of the House Education committee thank you for your support of our schools.

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The mission of NDSOS is to provide leadership for the small/rural schools in North Dakota and to support legislation favorable to their philosophy while opposing legislation that is harmful.