



1 HB 1337 – NDCEL Testimony in Support

2 Senator Schaible, members of the Senate Education committee – for the record my name is Aimee
3 Copas serving as the Executive Director for NDCEL.

4 What is presented in this bill is a good thing for a community that is struggling in population to
5 the point of the school being ready to close. I’ve been there – as a superintendent in South Dakota,
6 our school did close due to declining population. That is one of the most difficult things that a
7 community experiences. It is devastating. In South Dakota, there is exists a law that is very similar
8 to what is described here which enabled that school to sell to the city the building for \$1, keep the
9 lights on, and the town was able to convert that building into a better community center for the
10 folks living there and even turned the classrooms into little opportunities for patrons to utilize them
11 for various things. One classroom was a thrift store, others were offered as office space to people
12 attempting to start small businesses. It was a blessing to the community – to those tax payers who
13 had made that building possible to begin with.

14 This bill is providing the opportunity for a community to either keep a building such as this a part
15 of their communities and utilize it, or to do whatever they think they might need to.

16 This bill is simple yet impactful and we ask that you support the concept.

17 Thank you!