

NORTH BORDER SCHOOL DISTRICT #100

Neche-Pembina-Walhalla

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Chairman Schaible and members of the Senate Education Committee,

For the record my name is Brian Wolf, Superintendent of the North Border School District. I would like to thank you for all of your work and support for education in North Dakota. I am here today to testify on HB 1388. We are in favor of coming on the school funding formula. However, I would like to explain our unique situation at the North Border School District.

The communities of Neche, Pembina, and Walhalla consolidated and formed the North Border School District in 2005. We operate two PK-12 school districts, one in Pembina and one in Walhalla. These two schools are about 35 miles apart. North Border is one of the 94 transition minimum districts. Under the funding formula in HB 1388 North Border is projected to lose \$2.1 million of state funding over the next seven years. We still have two small, but necessary schools in our district. We are also bordered by Canada on the north and Minnesota on the east. We provide education opportunities for students in the northeast corner of the state with land that covers just under 600 square miles.

I believe our current funding model in HB 1388 has the unintended consequence of hurting schools in our situation.

Possible Solution:

With the current size of our school district, our school has a weighting factor of 1.1. As I previously stated, we operate two full PK-12 buildings. Most small districts have one PK-12 staff or a building with a K-6 format and a 7-12 format. We are one of three rural districts in the state that have two complete PK-12 teaching staffs. If an amendment could be made to the weighted formula, where we could be paid at the current rate other schools are being paid by their weighted units, it would absorb some of the costs. We could absorb about one third of the transition funding loss. A loss of state funding beyond that would put our school district in a financial position that may make it difficult to stay open in the future. Adjustments to the weighted formula, raising local taxes, and making cuts where possible would allow us to get on the formula and still provide great educational opportunities for our students.

To put this into perspective, it would take an additional 72 mills locally to offset the transition minimum loss we are scheduled to lose. I ask that you consider the weighted factor solution I am proposing.

I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Wolf

Brian Wolf, Superintendent

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

The North Border Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or handicap in its educational programs/activities and employment policies/practices.