

1 HB1185 – Relating to School Construction Projects and Inflation

2 Mandan Public Schools – Mike Bitz, Superintendent

3 Good morning Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate
4 Education Committee. For the record, my name is Mike Bitz. I
5 am fortunate to serve as the superintendent for Mandan Public
6 Schools. I am here today in support of HB1185. I will be brief.

7 I don't often look to the government to solve problems, but HB
8 1185 is needed legislation

9 In April of 2021, 78% of Mandan School District voters approved
10 an \$84,000,000 bond issue to build a new elementary school and
11 a new high school. MPS was also planning to spend roughly
12 \$10M in federal ESSER dollars to cover the \$94M estimated cost.
13 When the project was bid in the summer of 2022 inflation had
14 driven the project costs up to \$114,000,000. This is over a 20%
15 increase over our pre-bid estimates.

16 MPS is working hard to close this \$20M gap created by inflation
17 without having to go back to our taxpayers. We received an
18 \$8.5M CTE grant. We believe we will be able to raise \$3M from

1 community partnerships, we hope to sell surrounding property for
2 another \$4M. We have some existing authority in our building
3 fund, but this legislation would help us ensure that we don't need
4 to raise taxes for our residents beyond the \$99 in taxes for each
5 \$100,000 in property that we had told our taxpayers in our
6 information sessions prior to the referendum.

7 I urge you to vote YES on HB1185 and I would be happy to
8 answer any questions you may have.

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