

4 February 2025

Dear Members of the House Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in favor of HB 1590, relating to a student education services pilot program. Experts in the field can address the statistical benefits of supported school choice programs; my testimony offers the personal perspective of a parent to one private school student and one home-educated student. I urge the committee to provide a DO PASS recommendation for school choice bills for the following reasons:

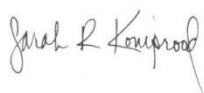
Educational savings accounts with matching funds would support equity and access to quality education. Choice without empowerment is little or no choice at all. Parents have the right and obligation to select for their children schools that correspond with their duty to nurture mind, soul, and body. Our communities and state have a corresponding obligation to concretely support this for all its citizens.

Educational strategies are significantly more effective when the individual learning needs and strengths of students are recognized and accommodated. Parents and students weigh multiple factors when determining best options for education. What is best for one student may be significantly different than for another. Supported school choice recognizes this reality. One of my children has significantly benefitted from enrollment in a local Catholic school that provides small class sizes, social-emotional support, and accommodations for learning needs. Our family has made economic sacrifices because we see firsthand the benefits of education which is rooted in truth about the human person, exercise of reason and will, and service to others. Accounts for education spending promote individualized teaching and learning, and therefore fairness in opportunities for success.

The accounts described in HB 1590 allow for flexibility in use of funds, including dual-enrollment courses, college preparatory exams, online courses, and learning needs-focused mental health services. This would expand access to educational services for all public and private students, particularly in rural and underserved areas. My child has desired to be home-educated for several important reasons and has thrived in this environment. Our family has spent significant resources on dual-enrollment and online courses and extracurricular activities because we recognize the value of these for our home-educated child's future success. All students would benefit from greater access to educational services which are expensive and are often not offered or funded in our public and private institutions.

Supported school choice creates equity in opportunities for all students' success. Please provide a DO PASS recommendation for HB 1590. My testimony is provided as a private citizen and does not state the position of my employer. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sarah R. Komproud".

Sarah Komproud, Grand Forks, ND