



Great Public Schools

Great Public Service

**Testimony Before the House Education Committee
HB 1590
February 5, 2025**

Chairman Heinert and members of the Committee, I am Nick Archuleta, and I am the president of ND United. I rise today in opposition to HB 1590 and encourage the House Education Committee to issue a ***do not pass*** recommendation for this proposed legislation.

Members of the Committee, HB 1590 contains some very good ideas that deserve to be considered. ND United and, according to a recent survey, 76% of North Dakotans favor a mechanism by which parents with school aged children can access public dollars to enhance educational experiences like mental or behavioral health assistance, educational camps like the excellent International Music Camp, standardized test fees, education materials and services for students with special needs, and other qualified educational expenses and experiences. If this were a stand-alone bill with a dedicated funding source, ND United would be in staunch support.

Unfortunately, in addition to the exceptionally good things, HB 1590 allows for spending dollars raised for public education and other public purposes on private school tuition. We have seen what happens to public school finances in other states when public money is diverted to private schools. ND United has historically opposed voucher bills like HB 1590 that provide public funds for private school tuition. Voucher bills like HB 1590 make it more difficult for North Dakota's great public schools to deliver on our promise and Constitutional obligation to educate every child that walks, runs, rolls, or is carried through our schoolhouse doors.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I urge a ***do not pass*** recommendation for HB 1590.