



Great Public Schools

Great Public Service

**Testimony Before the House Education Committee
SB 2400
Tuesday, March 18, 2025**

Chairman Heinert and members of the Committee, I am Nick Archuleta, and I am proud to represent public service professionals, including K-12 teachers and education support staff, as president of North Dakota United. On behalf of our statewide membership, I am appearing before you today to speak in opposition to SB 2400 and, respectfully, to urge you to render a ***do not pass*** recommendation for this proposed legislation.

Chairman Heinert, as I have said in previous testimony over the years, Opportunity Scholarships, Tax Credit Scholarships, Education Reimbursement Programs, Tuition Tax Credits, Education Choice Vouchers, Education Empowerment Programs, and as enshrined in SB 2400, Education Savings Accounts, are all euphemistic titles of plans that have the same effect of diverting dollars raised for public purposes, including public school education, to private schools, and home schools.

SB 2400 at least has something available to public school parents. We like the idea of the marketplace, at which homeschool parents, private school parents, and public-school parents can use public funds to avail their kids of ancillary educational enhancements. That is an exceptionally promising idea and if that is what this bill was about in its entirety, and the amount of money was the same for all families, I would be standing here in support. To improve this bill, I would suggest that either every family is means tested or that every family has the same amount set aside for its use at the marketplace.

Of course, ND United has long opposed using monies raised for public purposes to be diverted to private school tuition. After so many sessions of debating and arguing about this topic, our position is clear, as are the positions of many in the legislature and the non-public schools. At ND United, we believe that there is little upside for young people who live in the vast majority of counties without private school options and where their only chance to obtain remedial or educational enhancements is in their local school. Our preference is

that we fulfill our constitutional obligations to provide a system of public schools for the betterment of our students and our society. The \$58M provided for in SB 2400 will be better spent on service to the students in our outstanding public schools.

With that, Chairman Heinert, I will conclude my testimony and urge a ***do not pass*** recommendation for SB 2400.