

Hello, my name is Jacob Walsh, and I'm a junior at Mandan High School here in North Dakota. I'm here today to ask for your support on HB 1132, a bill that would allow schools to serve whole milk and 2% milk again.

Milk has always been a big part of my life. At home, I drink milk every day because it actually tastes good, and I know it's good for me. Whole milk is rich, creamy, and filling—it's something I actually enjoy. But when I get to school, the milk we're offered is nothing like what I drink at home. The skim and 1% milk we get now tastes watered down, and a lot of students don't even bother drinking it. I see cartons of milk being thrown away every day because people don't like it. That's a huge waste, not just of milk, but of the nutrition that's supposed to help us stay healthy and focused during the school day.

People might say that skim and 1% milk are "healthier," but that's not really true. Whole milk and 2% milk have important vitamins and healthy fats that actually help keep us full and give us energy. When we're hungry or not getting the nutrition we need, it's harder to concentrate in class and perform well in school. North Dakota is a dairy state—we produce some of the best milk in the country. So why aren't we allowing students to drink it?

HB 1132 isn't about forcing anyone to drink whole or 2% milk—it's about giving students a choice. Right now, we don't have that choice. If students prefer skim or 1% milk, that's fine, but many of us would rather drink the kind of milk we actually enjoy. If we had access to whole and 2% milk, I know a lot more students would actually drink it instead of throwing it away.

I strongly encourage you to support HB 1132 and give students like me the option to drink real milk at school. It's time to stop wasting milk and start giving us a choice. Thank you for your time.