

1 North Dakota School Study Council Testimony in Support of HB 1168 – Property
2 Tax Levies

3 Chairman Weber and Members of the Committee,

4 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1168. The schools I
5 represent support this bill.

6 I am testifying today in strong support of HB 1168 because it is the only bill that
7 comprehensively addresses the complexities of school funding while ensuring
8 equitable property tax relief across all types of property.

9 As we all recognize, school funding is deeply interconnected with property taxes,
10 making reform a delicate yet necessary task. HB 1168 is unique in its approach,
11 as it acknowledges the intricate nature of taxation while providing a structured
12 and balanced solution. The bill ensures fairness across residential, commercial,
13 and agricultural properties, preventing disproportionate burdens on any one
14 group.

15 This bill also recognizes the existing caps on school districts and how the caps
16 are intertwined with the school funding formula. The current school funding
17 formula creates equity and adequacy based on a settlement from a lawsuit
18 against the State. HB 1168 is the only bill that currently recognizes and
19 appropriately addresses the cap issue for school districts.

20 Tax relief is an enormous challenge—one that I do not envy—but it is crucial to
21 get it right. By supporting HB 1168, we can move toward a more equitable and
22 sustainable tax structure that meets the needs of our schools without
23 overburdening property owners.

24 I urge you to support this bill and move it forward for the benefit of our
25 communities, students, and taxpayers. Thank you for your time and
26 consideration. I am happy to answer any questions or provide additional
27 information.

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29 Dr. Paul Stremick