

HB 1350 – Approval of School District Construction Bonds

Williston Public School District #1 – Abbie Axtman Testimony

Williston Basin School District #7 – Abbie Axtman Testimony

My name is Abbie Axtman, and I am the chairman for the Williston Yes Committee that helped pass the reorganization of District 8 and District 1. I am in full support of HB 1350 to decrease the voting threshold from 60% to 55%. Our community is ready to come together as one unified district to improve education, but we still need to pass bond referendums to build new schools.

In the past 5 years both District 8 and District 1 have struggled to pass bond referendums. Bond referendums are the only option in our state to build new schools right now, and by lowering the threshold by 5% it would not only benefit our area but others across the state as well. District 8, District 1, and several other school districts across the state have both come within 2-4% of passing bonds in the past 5 years.

This bill would allow for the construction of new schools in school districts that are struggling to accommodate their students. We currently have an abundance of modular classrooms in both District 8 & District 1 that date back to the 1980's, and if this bill would pass we would have a better means to pass bond referendums to build much needed brick and mortar schools.

We want to continue to help ourselves and provide our students with state of the art schools to match our innovative teaching methods, and this bill could help us accomplish that with a more reasonable threshold. We know this is going to be a difficult couple of years for our state moving forward and this is one way to provide our local school districts a chance to be successful in improving our schools.