

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee,

Good morning. For the record my name is Beth Slette, superintendent of West Fargo Public Schools. I come to you today to request a 'do not pass' recommendation for H.C.R. 3007.

Schools have always had a multi-faceted mission: educating students, serving as a community institution and supporting our families. No year has this multi-faceted mission been more true than this year, in the midst of a pandemic. We maintain our commitment to a quality education, while also doing our part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

The sentiment of our community has been clear- students learn best in school. They ought to be in school as much as educators can safely ensure. We have worked diligently, tracking and monitoring positive case and quarantine numbers regularly to move ourselves back towards full-time instruction as soon as we are safely able to do so.

Currently, our elementary students, grades Kindergarten through five, will be back full-time, five days a week, starting next Monday. Our secondary students will be transitioning out of hybrid into majority instruction next week as well, on site four days per week.

Passage of H.C.R. 3007 would pull the rug out from our methodical planning to ensure instruction happens in an orderly and safe manner. We've learned so much since March 16<sup>th</sup> but need to ensure our transitions are thoughtful and recognize the will of our community and the culture of our staff. Terminating the governor's state of emergency would create numerous challenges for schools, chiefly the inability to continue our virtual program for families electing full-time distance learning, as well as our ability to strategically phase our secondary students back to full-time instruction. Termination would remove the ability to recognize virtual learning for the purposes of tracking ADM and receiving state aid.

Our teachers have never worked harder. Our parents have never worked harder. We have and remain willing to do the hard work of navigating this pandemic, with the best interests of our students at the center of everything we do. We want what you want- students in school learning. H.C.R. 3007 is not the best way to achieve that goal. Thank you for your time; I'm happy to stand for any questions you may have.