



1 HB 1367 – Date of Adoption and Referral of Budgets

2 NDCEL Testimony in Opposition

3 Chairman Dockter and members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee, for the record,  
4 my name is Dr. Aimee Copas – I serve as the Executive Director for the North Dakota Council of  
5 Educational Leaders representing your School Superintendents, Business Officials, Principals, and  
6 all other Directors and school leaders in our buildings.

7 We are here today to express our concern for this bill. A few years ago – all the political  
8 subdivisions listed in this bill worked diligently in partnership with the legislature to construct our  
9 transparency in taxation legislation that is in place and being executed today. Every voter in this  
10 state receives notification for all of the hearings impacting them. That statement also shows the  
11 amount being asked by each and every political subdivision. That annual open meeting that takes  
12 place is a wonderful opportunity for our patrons to come and be a part of the process. If there was  
13 concern about the amount being asked of them, there are avenues in which to be a part of the  
14 solution.

15 What we've found in relation to our schools, is that our patrons are not expressing discontent. In  
16 most of our districts, very few if any attend, and when they do, we hear it is usually just to observe  
17 the process and they are happy with the work their schools are doing. If you recall, districts were  
18 once able to ask for up to 185 mills from their patrons and now we are limited to 60 mills for the  
19 school funding formula and we have local discretion through our boards to ask for up to 12 more.  
20 In that level of authority is in place but most districts choose not to – only 37 districts have maxed  
21 out their mills and many of those districts have voter approved excess mill levy authority. Please  
22 know – schools are already capped – to ask for more we DO have to go to a vote. No district is  
23 getting more than authorized by government and the funding formula or they already have voter  
24 approval.

*NDCEL is the strongest unifying voice representing and supporting administrators and educational leaders in pursuit of quality education  
for all students in North Dakota.*

*Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Assistant Director: Russ Ziegler*



1 To ask for an annual vote is a poor use of taxpayer dollars not to mention it would decimate the  
2 transparent partnership process put into place recently by this legislature.

3 We ask you to trust our locally elected school boards to be good fiscal stewards in our  
4 communities, and for our patrons to take advantage of process already in place of there is any  
5 objection to what is done at the local level. We do ask for this committee to send this bill out with  
6 a Do Not Pass just as you did with a similar bill last session.