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House Bill 1531
North Dakota House Education Committee
Representative Heinert, Chairman
February 8, 2023

Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Tucker Bercier, a senior at Mayville State University studying social science education. I am an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. I write this testimony in complete opposition to HB 1531. As I pursue my bachelor's degree at Mayville State, as well as when I completed my associate's degree at Lake Region, I have been the recipient of partial educational costs waivers.

For many members of my tribe, as well as members of the other demographics listed in this bill, educational costs waivers open a door of opportunities. In regards to traditionally disadvantaged groups, these waivers provide incentives to pursue higher education. These groups have historically felt that higher education was a far away dream, primarily because of costs. Incentives, such as educational cost waivers, help these students to realize that those dreams are not too distant. For international students, another group potentially affected by this bill, these waivers help them in their pursuit of achieving the American dream.

Educational costs waivers are not meant to be prejudice, but are vital in bringing diverse individuals and perspectives to the majority populace of college students in North Dakota. The consequences of this bill would likely impact the decisions of thousands of potential students from home and across the country to pursue higher education in our great state.

For these reasons, I highly recommend a "do not pass" on HB 1531.