



*North Dakota Native Vote*  
*919 S. 7th St., Suite 603*  
*Bismarck, North Dakota 58504*  
*1-888-425-1483*  
[info@ndnativevote.org](mailto:info@ndnativevote.org)

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**Testimony of Sharnell Seaboy regarding House Bill 1531**  
**On behalf of North Dakota Native Vote**  
**February 9, 2023**  
**House Education Committee**

Chairman and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Sharnell Seaboy. I am an enrolled citizen of the Mni Wakan Oyate (Spirit Lake Nation). I am a Field Organizer at North Dakota Native Vote and am here to testify in opposition of House Bill 1531 on behalf of North Dakota Native Vote.

North Dakota Native Vote is a non-partisan grassroots organization. Our mission is to create and affect policy to promote equitable representation for the Native people of North Dakota.

House Bill 1531 will impact Native American Students in North Dakota who, as we know, are underrepresented and underserved. Tuition waivers and scholarships aimed towards Native American students create opportunities to pursue higher education in colleges and universities throughout North Dakota. Without these waivers and scholarships, students that come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds will lose the opportunity to attend a college that they might not otherwise be able to attend, and institutions will lose the opportunity to create cultural diversity that enriches the college experience.

The intent of House Bill 1531 will drastically limit the opportunities for everyday citizens to attend universities such as the University of North Dakota. The estimated cost of tuition and fees for attending, for example, UND costs approximately \$456.31 per credit and \$10,951 per academic year. For many North Dakotans, colleges have been the only available step up to greater stability for themselves and their communities. Unfortunately, that step is getting steeper and if you pass HB 1531 it would make it much more difficult for students to pay for and adequately resource the cost of attending college.

North Dakota Native Vote recommends a DO NOT PASS on House Bill 1531.  
Pidamiya-ye (Thank you).