

1 SB 2340

2 Testimony in Support

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4 Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee. For the record my name is
5 Dr. Michael McNeff – I serve as the superintendent of schools in Rugby, ND. I come to you today
6 to provide information on how difficult it is to find a traditionally trained school counselor.

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8 SB 2340 provides flexibility and allows school districts to meet the 300 students to 1 counselor
9 ratio criteria as described in 15.1-06-19 in elementary and secondary schools. The bill expands
10 the applicant pool for schools to include several other related fields that could fill the school
11 counselor position at a school district. These include a licensed social worker, licensed professional
12 counselor, licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed psychologist, licensend vocational
13 rehabilitation counselor, or a licensed addiction counselor.

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15 Our school district has had an open high school counselor position for a month and we have not
16 received an application to date. I am hearing the same issue across the state from my colleagues
17 and how they are not receiving applications for school counselors. There is no other place in law
18 that requires a specific number of employees within a school. If the quota is to remain in place,
19 then schools need more flexibility to provide a licensed professional to meet the school counselor
20 requirement. These other licensed professionals are likely living within our communities and may
21 be interested in working in our schools.

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23 Please issue a Do Pass on SB 2340.