

Chairman Sorvaag and Members of the Senate,

My name is Rebecca Hornung and I am a 7th grade teacher at North Border School in Walhalla, ND. I am writing to show my support for Senate Bill 2328. All three of my children have attended this school, with two of them already graduating from North Border. As a teacher and mother, I cannot stress the importance of our local schools to our children and communities.

I have lived in this area my entire life and have seen many small schools close over the years. I have seen the negative economic impact these closures have had on these communities. I feel that without this bill passing, our schools are being set up for decline and eventual closure.

In 2005, our school combined with Pembina and Neche after much push from the state to lessen the amount of school districts. Eventually, it became apparent that keeping the small Neche school open was not financial feasible, causing our district to make the difficult decision to close this school. This was not any easy choice, but the people of our communities realized it was what would be the best for our children and the remaining two schools.

I feel that even though we have done what the state originally wanted, we are still being penalized. Our district is very large, covering 546 miles, with our two remaining schools 35 miles apart. I can tell you that we as faculty and community members have worked very hard to make this arrangement work. I worry that if this bill does not pass, our district will not be able to survive the monetary hit our schools will take.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Hornung