

HB 1381 2025

Legislative Testimony

House Education Committee

Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee. For the record, my name is Michele Grenier and I am the Business Manager at Rolette Public School District #29 in Rolette, North Dakota. I am submitting written testimony in favor of HB 1381.

This would affect our district in the overall bottom line of the State Aid to Schools Payment Worksheet by less than ONE per pupil payment a year. While that may not seem worthy of even this testimony, much less a debate, I would argue that it IS of value out of principal. Reasoning being our district collects tuition payments for driver's education from students. It's minimal. The district pays the instructor well over what is collected, yet that tuition revenue is calculated into the local revenue reduction on the state aid worksheet and the state takes 75% of that revenue off of the state aid in the end. Our district receives a little over \$29,000 in "in-lieu" payments from the county. Certainly not any amount that is going to save the state enough dollars to call it property tax relief.

I understand that in areas where those in-lieu payments are much larger, the state would be saving \$34 million dollars, but in my opinion, this was never the state's money anyway, it was always intended to be the school district's as it is local money. In a district like ours, which loses taxable valuation yearly to land being purchased by the tribe, the state may look at it as giving us money, but our levied monies are being reduced already by lower taxable valuation. We shouldn't have to lose out on the in-lieu tax also.

I understand the fiscal responsibility the committee bears in regard to taxpayer dollars. North Dakota ranks high in the nation for K-12 education, with a high graduation rate and high SAT scores. It ranks 20th in the nation for per pupil spending. I believe you can trust North Dakota schools to spend these dollars to continue to benefit students' outcomes and get the most out of taxpayer dollars. Public schools in North Dakota care about students and how they spend their levies and state aid and they do it responsibly.

I urge you to vote yes on HB 1381.

Thank you for consideration, your work on the Education Committee and working to understand how schools truly operate.

Michele Grenier