



Testimony on HB 1100
National Association of Social Workers – North Dakota Chapter
House Education Committee
January 14, 2025

Chairman Heinert and Members of the House Education Committee:

The National Association of Social Workers – North Dakota Chapter (NASW-ND), expresses our strong support for HB 1100, which addresses the need to continue funding for free school meal programs and the reimbursement of delinquent meal debt. This bill not only provides essential financial relief to school districts but also promotes the well-being and academic success of our students, particularly those facing socioeconomic challenges.

Education plays a critical role in shaping children’s development, and NASW believes all students should have access to a quality education in a safe, supportive environment. Ensuring access to free meals is vital, as hunger can hinder learning, leading to poor performance and absenteeism. HB 1100 addresses this by helping school districts manage meal debt and removing this barrier to student success.

NASW also emphasizes the need for comprehensive support services for students, especially those facing homelessness, disability, or poverty. HB 1100 supports this by ensuring all students, regardless of financial status, can access the nutrition needed to thrive academically.

Additionally, NASW advocates for school social workers to support students' academic and emotional needs. By reducing meal debt and ensuring continued access to free meals, HB 1100 helps ease the pressures that affect students’ ability to focus on learning and well-being, fostering a more equitable educational environment.

In conclusion, NASW-ND supports HB 1100 as it aligns with our core values of ensuring that all children have access to the resources they need for educational success. We urge the committee to give HB 1100 a **Do Pass** recommendation, which will make a significant difference in the lives of students and the communities they belong to.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Loos

Lobbyist

North Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers