

Sir or Ma'am,

My name is Kari Kimball and I am writing my verbal testimony in opposition to the following bills proposed:

- HB1172 - payment for fees for courses provided by the Center for Distance Education

My children have been enrolled within the Minot Public School system since as early as 2009/2010. My husband (Russell Kimball) was in the Minot Public School system as early as 1997/1998.

In March 2020, when COVID-19 hit, our family experienced virtual academy for the first time. My children EXCELLED in this setting due to managing their own schedules, not being rushed, having one-on-one teacher interaction and all with an additional workload they would not typically receive in brick and mortar school. Since then, we have kept them in a virtual academy now NDCDE and they are A/B students still excelling and thriving.

When they attended school, their grades were lacking, they did not retain the information they were "learning", they focused on peer interaction versus academics and bad choices were being made. When in the brick and mortar school setting, they do not receive the one-on-one guidance from teachers as they should due to the teacher to student ratio. This can become frustrating and overwhelming if questions need to be asked/answered but there just "isn't enough time to get to everybody".

Being a military family (retired USAF of 24 years currently working with the Army as a civilian) utilizing NDCDE has become a necessity for our children. On the move, my children can still accomplish all of their academics without missing a beat. We have moved around the entire midwest of America and then to Germany within the last year and a half and they have not missed school or had lacking grades.

I have looked into how much it would cost to enroll my children in other virtual academy's and they are roughly \$500 per child per month. I currently have 3 children that are enrolled virtually and this would not be feasible for my family. Having them enroll in brick and mortar is also not an option for the reasons mentioned earlier. Although I understand that where the parent enrolls their child is a choice, having to come out of pocket for school should not be a price to pay for education that is not at the college level, (school K-12 - mandatory versus college - voluntary).

I know many other parents located around the world that utilize NDCDE and it has proven most beneficial to us all with the flexibility, engagement, and no-cost. This would hinder many families that rely on this great resource in its current state. Families that would not be able to not

only afford it but also allow their child an education. If we care about our children's education as much I hear a lot of people say, having families pay for a virtual academy should not be a topic of discussion. There are many other things that should take the front burner, not this item.

I sincerely hope you take my family's quick story into consideration and do not pass this bill. This does not only affect those living within North Dakota, but those who can utilize this fantastic service around the world.

Thank you for your time.

Kari Kimball (and family)