

Cami Jo Krueger  
1031 W. Owens Ave.  
Bismarck, ND 58501

February 10, 2025

Dear Chairperson Pat Heinert and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Cami Jo Krueger and I am writing as a concerned parent of a school-aged child in North Dakota to oppose HB 1449. This bill, which proposes changing the language from “must” to “shall” in making a reasonable effort to filling school counselor positions jeopardizes the well-being for the whole school environment.

School counselors play a critical role in our education system. I can attest to that when my children were younger and their school counselors gave them needed resources and techniques in learning essential skills. They provide academic guidance, mental health support, and career planning services that are essential for students’ overall development. In a time when students are facing unprecedented challenges—including academic pressures, social struggles, and mental health issues—counselors are often the first line of support. Removing the clear requirement to employ school counselors would weaken this support system and leave many students without the help they desperately need. My child included.

The proposed change from “must” to “shall” may seem like a small adjustment, but the implications are significant. It gives administrators the flexibility to deem these positions optional if they cannot find applicants. While I understand the difficulty in hiring counselors, this is not a problem that will be solved by eliminating the requirement. Instead, it sends a message that these roles are expendable, which they are not.

As a parent, I see firsthand the vital impact counselors have on students’ lives. These professionals are not a luxury; they are a necessity. By removing the mandate to employ them, HB 1449 puts our children’s education, mental health, and future success at risk.

I urge you to vote against HB 1449 and instead support initiatives that strengthen our schools, ensure equitable access to resources, and prioritize the well-being of our students. Thank you for considering this important matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Cami Jo Krueger  
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