

February 7, 2025

I am opposed to Bill 1456.

I googled “How many churches are in ND?” There are 1,138 religious organizations and churches. Combined, these earn more than \$29 million in revenue each year and have assets of \$96 million.

I then googled “How many schools are there in ND?” There are 484 schools. There are clearly enough religious organizations across the state to help serve the religious needs of North Dakota’s students. Religious organizations are extremely well represented in our state and benefit from significant tax breaks. Religious figures need not be given additional money from ND taxpayers to work in our schools offering “support, services, and programs” for students.

There should be a clear separation of church and state in our public schools. Public schools should not be staffed with taxpayer-funded chaplains, forced to post the ten commandments, or any other religious propaganda, no matter the denomination. Religious beliefs and direction are private, personal family matters that should remain OUTSIDE of our schools.

As a parent of a child in school, I do not want ANY religious focus being pushed on my child, from any religion. Not only is keeping the separation of church and state a respectful way to manage the varied religious beliefs of our diverse school population, but it is the law. Public schools are not intended to advance religious views that conflict with the beliefs of students and their families.

Please DO NOT PASS Bill 1456, and please do what you can to prevent bills like this from taking up your valuable time and our state’s resources in the future.

Lisa Rask

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