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2/10/2025

House Education Committee
Attn: Pat D. Heinert

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 1490

Dear Mr. Heinert and Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 1490, which would enact a new section to chapter 15.1-13 of the North Dakota Century Code, requiring psychological evaluations for school counselors. While I appreciate efforts to ensure the well-being of professionals in our schools, this bill is unnecessary, burdensome, and could negatively impact the field of school counseling.

First, school counselors are already subject to rigorous licensure requirements that include background checks, graduate-level education, and ongoing professional development. Adding an additional psychological evaluation requirement places an undue burden on counselors without clear evidence that it would improve student outcomes or counselor effectiveness.

Second, this bill could deter qualified individuals from entering or remaining in the school counseling profession at a time when mental health support for students is more critical than ever. Instead of imposing additional barriers, we should focus on expanding access to mental health resources and supporting the professionals who dedicate their careers to helping students succeed.

Finally, the bill raises concerns about privacy and potential discrimination. Mandating psychological evaluations for a specific profession without justification sets a concerning precedent and could lead to unnecessary stigma surrounding mental health in the workplace.

I urge you to vote against House Bill 1490 to ensure that school counselors can continue to serve students without unnecessary and intrusive regulations. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me at ashley.michael@k12.nd.us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Ashley Michael