

# Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 1540 – Expanded Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

Submitted by Christopher Hansen  
District 16 Resident & Parent  
JPII Catholic Schools

Hello House Education Committee,

My name is Christopher Hansen, and I live in District 16. I am a parent who has chosen to enroll my children in JPII Catholic Schools because I believe they deserve a high-quality, faith-based education in a safe and structured learning environment.

I am here today to strongly support House Bill No. 1540, but I also support all school choice legislation that allows parents to make the best educational decisions for their children without financial hardship. I support HB 1540 because it expands Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), allowing 80% of per-student state funding to be used for tuition, textbooks, and tutoring.

Our family has experienced both public and private education, and we made the intentional choice to switch to private school due to the declining safety and accountability issues in public schools. Our son attended and graduated from public school, and during that time, we saw multiple incidents of violence, school lockdowns, and legal issues involving teachers and administrators. Instead of focusing on educational excellence, too many public school teachers prioritize socializing with students instead of teaching them. This was not acceptable for my daughters' education, which is why we made the financially difficult choice to enroll them in a private Catholic school.

However, tuition costs are a major challenge for families like mine. We have had to cut expenses everywhere possible to provide our children with the education they deserve. HB 1540 would alleviate this burden by allowing families to use state funding for private school tuition, tutoring, and other essential educational expenses.

By allowing funding to follow the student, HB 1540 ensures that parents—not government bureaucrats—decide what is best for their children. This bill levels the playing field for families who want a better education for their children but struggle with affordability.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 1540 to provide families with the financial support and autonomy they need to choose the best education for their children.

Thank you for your service to the state of North Dakota and your time on House Bill 1540.

Sincerely,  
Christopher Hansen