



North Dakota Home School Association

Serving Home Educators since 1985

HB 1540

No

Chairman Beard and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

As representative for the North Dakota Home School Association (NDHSA), I would urge a **“do not pass” recommendation for HB 1540**. There are many bills this session deemed “choice” when they are really about funding. The NDHSA is and has always been opposed to public funding of home education. That is where the vast majority of homeschoolers land on this issue and yet we are always added to these bills. It is frustrating and gives both legislators and the public the impression that home educators are wanting public funding of their educational choice - **this is not true!**

Publicly funding home education or private education will in essence end private education through the loss of independence and autonomy. We hear over and over that our freedoms will be preserved and there won't be strings attached, but that is a fantasy. When people become dependent on government, often they are willing to give up freedom rather than to lose that “help.”

As I digest the bill it does leave me a bit confused. Page 4 line 26 uses the term “private school.” So is this a bill to fund private schools with tax payer dollars? Page 3 lines 4 and 5 says that monies can be used to purchase curriculum or pay tuition fees for online learning programs. That could indicate homeschools. Then on page 4 lines 3 and 4, it says a student can transfer to another private school or homeschool and retain funds.

Several countries which embraced “school choice” through funding eventually lost the ability to have prayer or religious curriculum in their once private schools. Homeschooling also became illegal. This has happened in Sweden, Australia and South Africa. Home educators in these countries are embroiled in court battles and some have had their children removed by the state because of programs such as are being proposed and implemented in the United States.

We would respectfully ask you to use these dollars in another way and keep home educators out of all Education Savings Account bills.

Sincerely,

Theresa Deckert 701-662-4790

Legislative Liaison/Lobbyist

North Dakota Home School Association