

Testimony in Opposition to HB1540

Submitted by Sandy Hansen, resident of Barnes County, ND

I would like to encourage the committee to give this bill a “Do Not Pass” recommendation. More studies need to be done to determine the effect on the state’s budgeting for education and how this could benefit some to the detriment of others.

Public funds that are used to send kids to private schools are vouchers, not ‘education savings accounts (ESA).’ A recent poll from North Dakota United found that 68% of North Dakota citizens do not want their taxpayer dollars paying for private school tuition. Lower-income families, students receiving special education services and students in need of extracurricular or specialized programs would be disproportionately impacted by an ESA program.

We are a rural state with limited funds available for our public schools. Re-routing public tax dollars needed for those unable to afford private education to non-public education seems a misuse of those funds without further investigation of consequences. Our public dollars would be better used on supporting our public schools and their staff.

PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB1540. Thank you.