

Members of the Committee,

My name is Johnna Varty, and I am honored to submit this testimony in support of House Bill 1540. As a former public school teacher and a mother whose children attend a private school, I have seen firsthand the importance of ensuring that every child has access to the best educational opportunities suited to their unique needs. I believe that parents should have the ability to choose the right educational environment for their children, whether that be a public, private, homeschool, or other alternative setting.

For many families, however, the ability to make these choices is often hindered by financial and logistical obstacles. While every child learns differently, and some thrive in non-public school settings, the reality is that many parents are unable to afford tuition, supplies, or other necessary resources that would allow them to pursue the best education for their children. This forces many families to settle for options that may not fully meet their child's academic, social, or developmental needs simply because they lack the financial means to choose otherwise.

House Bill 1540 would help address these barriers by establishing an Education Savings Account (ESA) program, giving families the financial flexibility to select the educational setting that best supports their child's success. By allowing state-allocated funds to follow the student rather than being tied exclusively to the public school system, ESAs empower parents to make decisions that prioritize their child's education. These accounts could be used for tuition, educational therapies, curriculum materials, and other essential learning resources—ultimately providing greater access to high-quality education and ensuring that children are placed in the environments where they will thrive.

Education is not one-size-fits-all, and families should not be restricted in their ability to choose the best path for their children due to financial constraints. House Bill 1540 would provide parents with the opportunity to make meaningful educational choices, ensuring that every child has the chance to reach their fullest potential.

I respectfully urge you to support this bill and help provide families with the freedom to pursue the best possible education for their children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Johnna Varty