

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1547

Presented to the House Education Committee
North Dakota Legislative Assembly

Chairperson Heinert, Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Matt Liebel, and I am here today to express my strong support for House Bill 1547, which seeks to create a committee to study special education funding during the 2025-26 interim.

I spent 15 years as a middle school science teacher and recently transitioned into my role as a Field Consultant for North Dakota United. As part of this work, I am involved in the NDU SPED Collective, where I hear directly from special education teachers about the challenges they face. One of the most pressing concerns they share is the inadequacy and complexity of special education funding.

Special education teachers are working with increasing caseloads, limited resources, and a lack of adequate support staff. Schools are struggling to meet the needs of students due to funding shortfalls, forcing difficult decisions that impact services, staffing, and the overall quality of education for students with disabilities. Without a thorough examination of how special education is funded in North Dakota, these challenges will only continue to grow.

A dedicated study of special education funding is a necessary step in identifying solutions that ensure equitable and sustainable support for students, teachers, and schools. HB 1547 provides an opportunity for stakeholders to collaborate, analyze funding gaps, and recommend policies that will strengthen special education across the state.

I urge this committee to support HB 1547 and take action to ensure that North Dakota's special education system is adequately funded and prepared to meet the needs of all students. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Liebel
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