

Members of the House Education Committee,

I am Brenda Seehafer, an elementary Title I reading and math teacher from Rolla, ND. I am asking you to oppose the following three bills: HB 1540, HB 1590, and HB 1607. All three of these bills relate to educational savings accounts.

Public dollars belong in public schools, which is the bottom line of my opposition to these bills. Private schools are just not held to the same transparency, accountability, or accessibility standards as our public schools; private schools don't have to take **all** students. Private school vouchers/educational savings accounts do not save taxpayers money and have resulted in multi-million-dollar deficits and tax increases in places like Arizona. Only 17 of our 53 counties or about 32% of North Dakota counties have access to a private school, so why would we do this? Why should rural North Dakotans foot the bill to send city kids to private schools, because that is just what these bills do to rural North Dakotans.

I am asking you to oppose HB 1540, HB 1590, and HB 1607. Don't use our public dollars on vouchers or educational savings accounts because that is not what North Dakota needs or wants.