

As a private school parent, I understand the importance of private schools. My husband and I make the choice every year to send our kids to a private school that we feel provides them with the education they need. This is a financial, educational, and social choice we make every school year.

As a public-school teacher, I 100% value public school educators and students and understand the importance of every kid receiving a quality education. Public schools are notoriously underfunded, and teachers are underpaid for the amazing work they do. While that is the case, every teacher I know are there for the kids every day to provide them with the best education possible.

Taking public funds and routing them to private schools is not the answer. I know many have argued that these are not funds that will be allocated to public school anyway. I don't see that being an argument. These are public funds; they should not be used for private education. There are not enough private schools and not enough accountability in private schools for these types of bills to function appropriately. They tend to prioritize families like mine that can afford private school education already.

(<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/arizonas-universal-education-savings-account-program-has-become-a-handout-to-the-wealthy/#:~:text=Some%20of%20the%20takeaways%20from,likely%20to%20obtain%20ESA%20funds.>) The people taking advantage of these programs will not be those families that need the funding and if they do, these funds will not be enough to pay for a full school year of private education. If we want to prioritize education in ND and make students more successful, we should be looking at expanding programs like counselors, OT, PT, advanced learning programs for high learners, more paraprofessionals, smaller classroom sizes, state funded reading and math interventionist, the list can go on and on. Taking these taxpayer funds and using them to fund private and or religious education (in most cases in ND) is not what taxpayers want.

As someone who would financially benefit from this bill passing, I am submitting this testament to make it clear that I DO NOT want public funds to be used for private education.