

Senate Bill 2400
House Education Committee -- Representative Pat D. Heinert, Chair
March 18, 2025 -- Testimony in Opposition to SB 2400

Chairman Heinert and Members of the House Education Committee, I am Vicki Voldal Rosenau, a parent and resident of Valley City, ND. Thank you for this opportunity to offer my testimony in opposition to SB 2400.

I oppose SB 2400 because it is part of a serious attack on our North Dakota public schools. Promoters of school privatization are pushing for **an extremely radical change to our state's entire K-12 educational system**. It is radical because the unpopular scheme to divert untold millions of public tax dollars into private and homeschool operations would undermine public schools—and the small and rural communities that depend on them.

SB 2400, by forcing all taxpayers to fund private schooling entities, would drain limited public resources. What's worse, it would drastically damage North Dakota's small-town way-of-life, and likely force the closure of small public schools that currently serve as the hearts of our communities, both economically and socially.

Sadly, some promoters of this and the other privatization bills are spreading lies about our public schools. Let's set the record straight with two key, documented facts:

1. FACT: North Dakota's public schools rank among the best in the nation, with strong academic performance and national recognition. [<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/news/national-exam-nd-students-show-strength-math> , <https://www.kxnet.com/news/state-news/north-dakota-ranks-high-for-k-12-education/> and <https://insights.nd.gov/Education/State/StateAssessment/StudentAchievement>]

2. FACT: We do NOT need to publicly fund private entities in order to offer all students ample learning-pathway choices, because our public schools already offer a wide range of innovative education-choice options. Moreover, our public-schools network has the capacity to efficiently expand new opportunities as needed, without diverting any funds to private or charter facilities. Copious proof of this has been presented in compelling committee testimonies this year!

Lawmakers who are still pushing SB 2400 are ignoring the clear will of North Dakotans; they know that at least 68% oppose this misuse of huge amounts of taxpayer dollars. (Voters realize that any privatization of state school funds this year would just be letting the camel's nose under the tent.)

At this point, it feels as if we North Dakotans are threatened with having a huge chunk of our tax dollars and a critical piece of our lifestyle taken from us against our will. That would be flat-out wrong.

Chairman Heinert and Committee, please recommend "Do Not Pass" on HB 1540.

Thank you for your consideration,
Vicki Voldal Rosenau, Valley City