

Dear Legislators,

HB 15450

First and foremost, I want to thank you for your service to the state of ND and the community of Bismarck ND where I reside. This is a community where I feel safe, I can support my family, and the community services meet the needs of the residents of Bismarck. I now would like to talk about the issue at hand, our schools. I believe that nearly all the school grades in kindergarten through the 12th grade are very good, my message isn't about problems in any of our schools. Yes, we all have problems, but they pale in comparison to the rest of the country. Our only problem is the fact that it is becoming more and more difficult to receive an education from a school you would choose. It has always been established that parents are the 1st and best teachers of their children. They decide how to get that done, it is on them, it is their choice and their responsibility. In our current situation, there are only two choices, 1 is to send your kid to a public school, the other is to pay a great deal of your hard-earned income to a private or Catholic school. There is a myth out there that everyone attending a private or Catholic school is rich, they can afford it, so they should not receive any help or assistance.

My Grandfather, my Father, and I have all sent every one of our children to Catholic schools. We made a choice, we believe in it, and we have proven over the years that it works, and we do just as good as the public school system, in some cases maybe a little better. To me this is very simple, we pay all our taxes, and we have done so for 3 generations, over 70 years of students. Our taxes provide payment for a desk for all our children in a public school. But none of our children have ever used the desk, or the gym, or the bus, or the auditorium, or the playground.....etc. We have nothing against public schools. 3 generations of my family have attended Catholic school, and we are not rich, we live from month to month and have a small savings like many people in this great state. Why do we not receive some credit or rebate of our tax dollars that should be set aside each year for the education of our children. It is our choice, we've paid our dues, and it is time that our leaders recognize the value of what the Catholic Schools bring to our communities. From our Catholic Schools, there are countless entrepreneurs that own several businesses, doctors, lawyers, clergy, nurses, engineers, dentists, skilled professionals, teachers, coaches We could go on and on. These people anti up every year for their children, its time for the state to give back to those who choose Catholic & Private School. Think about this, if our Catholic and private schools closed tomorrow, you as legislators would need to find hundreds of millions of dollars to make room for a desk for our kids. Think about that for a moment, and consider a decent credit for our Choice!

Sincerely

Tobias Schweitzer / SMCHS Class of 1985 / Football Coach / Mission Advancement Officer