

## Testimony in Support of House Bill 1540

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing today in strong support of House Bill 1540.

I am a resident of the West Fargo school district. Fargo and West Fargo are home to some of the largest school districts in North Dakota. While these districts serve many students well, others thrive in smaller educational environments that provide a more personalized approach to learning. As a parent who has chosen Oak Grove Lutheran School in Fargo for my children's education, I know firsthand the significance of school choice and the impact it has on students and families. The ability to choose this environment for my children is invaluable, but the financial burden is significant. House Bill 1540 would alleviate some of this burden, making school choice more accessible for families like mine.

School choice is an approach that has been embraced in many states, offering families flexibility in how they educate their children. Research indicates that these initiatives can lead to improved academic performance, higher graduation rates, and increased college enrollment. Additionally, competition from school choice programs has been shown to enhance public school performance while creating fiscal savings for taxpayers.

Critics argue that school choice diverts funds from public schools. However, evidence suggests that public school funding remains strong, and states with school choice programs have seen continued investment in public education. House Bill 1540 represents an opportunity for North Dakota to empower families with educational choices and recognize that every child is unique and deserves access to an environment where they can thrive.

I urge you to support HB 1540 and help provide North Dakota families with the freedom to choose the best educational path for their children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Sharlynn Berns