

Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Kelsey Connole and I am writing today in support of HB 1540. My husband and I are the parents of two North Dakota, elementary-aged school children. Like all parents, we are always looking for ways to best support our children's growth and development, and one of those ways is by choosing the schools our children attend.

The capacity for parents to make educational choices for their children is a freedom that should be allowed to all regardless of financial ability. Parents are increasingly choosing to send their children to non-public schools, but doing so does not come without the financial burden of non-public school tuition.

Having an Educational Savings Account could greatly benefit our family. More importantly, an Educational Savings Account could greatly benefit the families of children whose parents desire a non-public school education for their children but are unable to make a commitment due to financial hardship. Parents of all families deserve to be able to make the educational choices they see best fit their children.

Not only would the passing of this bill create opportunities for parents to make educational choices for their children, it would also allow the tax dollars of families who send their children to non-public schools to be justly distributed among North Dakota students.

I strongly urge you to consider a 'Do Pass' on HB 1540 for the freedom of educational choice for the parents of North Dakota.

Thank you,

Michael & Kelsey Connole