

Senate Education Committee
HB 1540
March 16, 2025

Chair Beard, Vice Chair Lemm, and members of the Committee,

I'm writing to you as a taxpayer, proud mother of two public school students, and an active community member. **I strongly urge you to oppose HB 1540.** North Dakotans have consistently rejected voucher programs, recognizing that no matter what they are called, they all have the same effect: diverting public funds to subsidize private schools.

Voucher programs lack accountability, are not fiscally responsible, and create massive, unsustainable costs for states that implement them. The estimated \$40 million price tag of HB 1540 is a tremendous waste of taxpayer funds, especially when our public schools—serving the vast majority of North Dakota's students—continue to need resources and support. These programs do not save taxpayer money; instead, they have led to multi-million dollar deficits and tax increases elsewhere.

In North Dakota, these programs overwhelmingly benefit our largest cities, leaving rural communities without the same options while still footing the bill. Public education is a cornerstone of our democracy and a promise to every child, regardless of zip code. Instead of sending taxpayer dollars to private institutions with little oversight, we should focus on strengthening our public schools, which serve all students and are accountable to the public.

Please stand with North Dakotans and vote NO on HB 1540.

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