

Members of the Committee,

As young professionals, my husband and I do not yet have kids, but we support public schools because public education helps us all. I urge a DO NOT PASS recommendation on HB1540, because it would allocate public dollars toward private schools- which don't receive the same accountability and oversight as public schools. Additionally, accurately tracking the "educational outcomes" from the other qualified expenses does not seem feasible. Further, the bureaucracy and administrative costs of this proposed program seem fiscally irresponsible.

Of course we should have programs that help working families, and there are plenty of chances to do that- from support for public schools, community programs open to all, and providing healthy meals to all students. Please do not spend millions of dollars on an ESA program. Most North Dakotans do not want public dollars going private schools. Many examples from other voucher-style programs show these programs help primarily folks already paying for private schools rather than lifting up the educational opportunities for more students. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Olivia Schloegel
Jamestown, ND