

Dear Chairman Heinert and Committee,

My name is Samantha Bryans. I live in District #38, and I am a parent who has chosen to send my children to Bishop Ryan Catholic School. I support HB1540 because it will positively impact our family by easing the financial burden of a private school education. A private school education was an easy decision for our family; we have chosen to lead our family in the Catholic faith, ground our parenting in virtue, and be prudent in our decisions that will help get our children to Heaven, help to make them virtuous leaders, and help to cultivate adults who are contributing members of society.

In 2016, my husband and I were considering options for pre-school for our oldest son. Bishop Ryan offered a full, five-day pre-school option that was unavailable anywhere else. Three months after enrolling, our son was diagnosed with Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Strep. We spent the next 18 months doctoring between Minot, Mayo, and Washington D.C. He was required to be on three different medications three times a day and to do blood work every three weeks. The principal at Bishop Ryan Catholic School offered up her office as a place for him to rest, his classmates' parents jumped in to help with whatever was needed, and when our second son came eight weeks early, the school provided support while we were stretched thin between doctoring for our oldest son and time spent in the NICU. We had several priests and staff members praying for and with our family, offering an anointing of the sick, and providing spiritual support that we would not have received had we enrolled him in a public school. Between an active and open Catholic faith, small class sizes, and an education grounded in virtue, the private school education has inculcated a desire to grow in Christ simultaneously with education.

As an educator myself, I support both public and private school education. However, it is constitutional to provide both the choice and appropriations granted by the state legislator. Please help us to ease the financial burden so that families like ours can provide the best learning environment for our children and their specific needs. I urge you to vote in favor of HB1540.

Thank you for your service to the state of North Dakota and for your time on HB1540.

Sincerely,

Samantha and Ryan Bryans