

Members of the Education Committee:

My name is Nancy Farnham and I live in Enderlin, ND. I am submitting this written testimony in opposition to HB1540.

I believe that public dollars should remain with public schools for many reasons, including the fact that public schools are the heart of our rural communities, they need funds to recruit quality teachers as more teachers are reaching retirement age, and public school test results are showing that students are receiving a quality education in our public schools today. There are many reasons to oppose HB1540 and support public education, but I am going to focus on one issue that is very important to me in this testimony.

I believe in the value of a strong public education system that is available to all students, regardless of abilities or special needs. All children deserve a good education. Private schools are not required to provide for special needs and can select or refuse students for admission based on whatever criteria they wish. My son required speech services while he was in elementary school and he received the services he needed to succeed at our local public school. My granddaughter is currently in kindergarten and was recently diagnosed with dyslexia. She is receiving the services she needs through the public school system.

Public schools accept all students and provide the support students need to succeed in life. Private schools are not required to provide an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or special education services. Public schools deserve our support so they can continue to provide high quality education for all students. Public tax money should continue to be used for our public education system, not for private schools that are not held to the same standards as our public system.

I ask you to oppose HB1540.

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