

Chairman Beard, members of the Senate Education Committee, and all Senators,

I am writing as a proud teacher from rural North Dakota to strongly urge you to vote **NO** on **House Bill 1540** and **Senate Bill 2400**.

These bills are nothing more than school voucher schemes that take public tax dollars away from public schools and funnel them into private schools and private families. This is unacceptable.

Our rural public schools are the backbone of our communities. Every dollar diverted from public education weakens the opportunities and resources available to our students, teachers, and families. Rural schools already operate on limited budgets, facing staffing shortages, transportation challenges, and limited access to specialized programs. We cannot afford to have our public funds stripped away to subsidize private institutions that are not held to the same standards, do not serve all students, and are not accountable to taxpayers.

Public money belongs in **public schools**, period.

HB 1540 and SB 2400 threaten to deepen the divide between students who have access to quality education and those left behind in underfunded public schools. In small communities like mine, where the local public school is often the only option, these bills are a direct attack on our students' futures.

I respectfully ask you to stand with North Dakota's public schools, rural communities, and taxpayers by opposing HB 1540 and SB 2400. Keep public dollars where they belong—in **public schools, serving every student**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Leah Brooks