

Greetings Chairperson Beard and members of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 1540. Education Savings Accounts, vouchers, school choice are the synonyms for what this bill pertains to, but what it really means is that public dollars are being used for private use. The choices that parents/families make are their CHOICE--they can choose private school or homeschool or public school. The cost of up to \$40,000,000 is an exorbitant amount and would not be a fiscally responsible decision made with taxpayer dollars.

The other reason for my opposition to HB 1540 is the lack of accountability by private schools and homeschools but yet is required for public schools. Providing funding, without the accountability, is not a fair and equitable stance.

The success of public schools across our state is outstanding! I am a school superintendent in a district where no private school options are available. I am also a taxpayer in a different school district where no private school options are available. I am also a parent of two children that are public school teachers and a grandparent of public school educated grandchildren. Bills such as HB 1540 will only erode sustainability of success in not only my district, but in school districts all across North Dakota!

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Manley, Superintendent of Leeds Public School