

House Bill 1540 and Senate Bill 2400 – Do Not Pass

My family farms in Butte, a tiny town in McLean County. My mother and aunts were public school teachers in Butte, Minot and Bismarck. I live in Bismarck and pay taxes in both Burleigh and McLean counties.

I am opposed to both HB 1540 and SB 2400 for a few reasons:

1- Small towns like Butte don't have private schools or access to many of the services listed on the “eligible expenses” of these bills. In many cases, the only place for small-town kids to receive dyslexia services or mental health help is the public school and those services are already covered by taxpayer money. Giving taxpayer money to parents to spend on private school or private services separate from the public school will not benefit the rural kids nor the rural schools. Their “problem” isn't not having the money for these things it's that these things don't exist for them outside the public school.

2- The majority of students benefiting from education spending accounts like those set up in these two bills are ALREADY enrolled in private school or already receiving services through a private business. In some states, that percentage is as high as 93%. So we are not creating more options nor are we providing actual choices with either of these bills.

Please do not pass 1540 nor 2400 as they are not solutions for improving education in ND and will not benefit the majority of ND kids.

Sincerely,
Karen Wolfer
Bismarck, ND