

My name is Barry Nelson, I live in Fargo, ND and I am opposed to HB1540 and urge a no vote on this attempt to divert monies away from our public schools.

I am a product of the North Dakota public school system graduating from the small public school in Kathryn, ND. My wife is a product of the North Dakota public school system graduating from the moderately sized public school in Bowman, North Dakota. My children are products of the North Dakota public school system, both graduating from Fargo North. Currently, I have five grandchildren either attending public school in North Dakota or soon to be. We would all attest to the fine quality of those educations and advocate that a highly successful public school system should not be tampered with, much less undercut with funding.

Adequate funding has always been the hallmark of public education in North Dakota. Despite our state ranking near the bottom of salaries for our teachers, we continue to see exemplary staff filling those teaching roles. Our efforts should be directed at supporting our current system, while making sure that special services are adequately funded and that eventually school lunch for all is instituted.

We at one point considered private schooling for our children. We have relatives who have elected to send their children to private schools. Under both circumstances we know that if we choose a private education, it would be at our cost. I have no regrets that we chose to keep our children in public schools as they received an excellent education.

Please vote no on HB1520.