

March 17, 2025



Chairman Beard and Senate Education Committee Members,

On behalf of North Dakotans for Public Schools, I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB 1540. North Dakotans for Public Schools is a growing, grassroots coalition North Dakotans who oppose, in any form, the use of public funds to subsidize private, parochial, homeschool, or any other non-public education. In addition to opposing all forms of voucher programs, this coalition of parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, community-minded neighbors, and friends of public education recognizes and values the essential role that our public schools play in shaping and preparing our children's futures, in partnering with hard-working families, in strengthening our local economies and businesses, in the viability and sustainability of our communities, especially our most rural communities, and in our society as a whole.

Very practically speaking, you will choose where and to what levels the legislature will fund its obligations for the next biennium. While the legislature has been generous in the state's contributions to our public schools, and that generosity has both helped to fund crucial programs, services, and staff that support the educational needs of its students AND has provided significant and ongoing property tax relief, the needs of students and families being served by our public schools continue to grow, deepening the challenges that make the job of educators even harder. Your first and foremost priority in terms of dedicating funding to education should be to more adequately and equitably fund our state's public schools, and we respectfully ask that any funds that are available to fund voucher programs be dedicated to public schools.

On behalf of the members of North Dakotans for Public Schools, we stand united in opposition to HB 1540, request a Do Not Pass Recommendation from the Committee, and ask for your "No" votes as this bill moves throughout the legislative process.

Thank you for your service and for reaffirming your commitment to public schools this legislative session.

Erin Oban,
North Dakotans for Public Schools

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