



Contact:
Matt Perdue, Lobbyist
mperdue@ndfu.org | 701.952.0120

**Testimony of
Matt Perdue
North Dakota Farmers Union
Regarding HB 1540
Senate Education Committee
March 17, 2025**

Chairman Beard and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill No. 1540. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union (NDFU) and its members. NDFU opposes HB 1540.

HB 1540 establishes a new Education Savings Account program. The program provides 40% of the state per-student funding to students who choose to attend private schools. The funds may be used to cover tuition and fees, textbooks and materials, computer equipment and other costs. However, the program is only available to students who attend non-public schools.

Our member-driven Policy & Action states, “We are opposed to public funding of private schools.” While we support parents’ right to choose the educational experience that best meets their child’s needs, many rural families simply do not have viable access to private schools. Currently, there are only 60 private schools in North Dakota, most of which are urban. Public schools, on the other hand, serve 90% of the state’s students including in most rural counties.

This legislation’s exclusive focus on private education undercuts rural students’ access to the new educational opportunities HB 1540 seeks to create. The best solution to improve educational opportunities for our students, especially our rural students, is to increase investment in public education.

We respectfully encourage a “Do Not Pass” recommendation on HB 1540. Thank you for your consideration.