

# Senate Education Committee

Senate Bill 2241

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Written Testimony

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Chairman Beard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrew Alexis Varvel.

I live in Bismarck.

This testimony is neutral. Although I don't necessarily oppose this attempt to create charter schools in North Dakota, I think that this bill would need considerable revision before I could ever support it.

I dislike page 2, line 31. It says: "May charge tuition and fees."

Please take it out.

If we are going to have charter schools, they must not become enclaves of wealthy entitlement. Rather, these schools must provide a solid education to people of various economic strata and provide an educational theme which significantly differentiates itself from the curriculum normally found in public schools.

For example, if charter schools could provide an opportunity for immersive teaching in local indigenous languages within an urban setting, I'd feel considerably less skeptical about this legislation.

Furthermore, charter schools should be restricted to incorporated cities with a minimum population. Perhaps the lower limit should be 45,000, which would restrict these schools to four cities.

This restriction is important, as charter schools would provide considerable economic stress to small districts in rural areas – where every student lost means fewer tax dollars available.

In contrast, larger cities have considerably more wiggle room to make adjustments. Furthermore, there would be more demand in urban areas for specialties not necessarily offered in public schools.

Without considerable revision, I don't think I could – in my heart of hearts – support Senate Bill 2241. This doesn't mean I oppose charter schools categorically. And with the revisions I am recommending, I think I could come around to supporting this bill.

This concludes my **NEUTRAL** testimony on Senate Bill 2241.

Thank you.