

TESTIMONY on SB 2241 to the SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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Chairman, committee members, thank you for hearing my testimony on SB 2241 related to Charter Schools. I am a former long term school board member, and appreciate the incredible importance of education for our students and the state's constitutional commitment to provide education for ALL our students.

I've spent some time reviewing the effectiveness/benefits of charter schools across the USA and I do not see that they offer much benefit to our students in North Dakota and there is potential for harm.

1. On page 2 line 29 the bill uses the words “**May not** engage in religious practices in its educational program...” The words MAY NOT indicate something could happen or would not have to happen. I would suggest changing the words to say “**MUST NOT** engage in religious practices ....”
2. There is little explanation in the bill regarding funding. With the wide range of responsibility of the superintendent of public instruction for supervising charter schools, it would be obvious that DPI would need to expand in some way thereby incurring costs.
3. Regarding cost, there is an economy of scale that is lost when students are removed from a public school and attend a charter school—operating two schools where previously there was one.
4. Removing policy and programming from an elected school board to a private/non elected board while using public funds/tax payer money is not acceptable.
5. In a report by the Brookings Institute they conclude there is some evidence that funding charter schools results in reduced funding of traditional public schools or creates funding uncertainty for them.

Thank you for reviewing my testimony. Please **vote no** on SB 2241.