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February 3, 2025

The Honorable Todd Beard  
Chairperson  
Senate Education Committee

**RE: *Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 2295***

Dear Chairperson Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee:

By way of introduction, Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) is a national organization committed to advocating for homeschool freedom and homeschool families. With over 95,000 member families, we are the world's largest homeschool advocacy organization. Thank you for your service to North Dakota families and for considering this written testimony in opposition to SB 2295.

Simply put, we believe that public tax-payer aid directly to home educating families is poisonous to the homeschooling movement. We oppose the public funding of private home education.

The modern homeschool movement over the past 40+ years has been successful not because of government funding, but because of the voluntary association of parents who love their children and desire the best for them.

First, the public, taxpayer funding of private home education places, at least in some small manner, the responsibility for approving decisions of home educating families in the hands of the state. After all, when the government collects tax dollars from residents and gives those taxes dollars to others (in the form of state aid), the state ought to know how that aid is being spent.



Second, there is ample evidence that public funding of private education has not produced the results many desire. Just look to the examples of Arizona, Florida, West Virginia, Arkansas and others to find recent examples of the cost of these programs and the bureaucratic hurdles they create.

Third, this legislation does not expand meaningful educational options for any North Dakota children. S.B. 2295 does nothing to provide any additional choice, but simply provides state aid to the choice that parents already (or want to) make. It forces the tax-payers of North Dakota to pay for the private educational decisions of other families and does not provide any additional education options for families in the state.

Finally, state aid to home education is premised on the notion that the education of children is a state responsibility based on the interests of the state. We disagree. We agree with the Supreme Court when it stated 100 years ago in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*: “The child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations.” (268 U.S. 510 (1925)). It’s the parent who has this duty, not the state.

For over four decades, HSLDA has stood for homeschool freedom. S.B. 2295, as drafted represents a step away from liberty.

Please oppose S.B. 2295.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin M. Boden".

Kevin M. Boden, Esq.  
Staff Attorney