

February 3, 2025

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Dr. Leroy Huizenga, and my wife Kari and I live in District 35 in Bismarck. We are writing in support of SB 2303.

My wife and I have homeschooled our three children. The eldest (now 16) has attended St. Mary's High School the past couple years, while our 14-year-old and 10-year-old are yet at home. While now employed in a different sector, I used to be in higher education in the Chicago area and Bismarck.

Given our experience in educating our children and my experience as an educator, we have come to the conviction that parents are in the best position to decide what the best course of education is for their particular children in a particular season. For some children, that could be public schools (as it happens, I'm a product of Minot Public Schools, while my wife is a product of Park River and Devils Lake Public Schools), for others, private schools, for others, home school.

For instance, when our eldest son hit a certain age, it became apparent a traditional school setting would serve him best, so we explored part- and full-time options at Legacy, the Career Academy, and St. Mary's. We decided St. Mary's full-time would serve him best. He's thriving there, while the other two are thriving at home. And as we go forward, we as parents will continue to evaluate what's best for each.

As residents of ND and taxpayers, my wife and I are therefore of the conviction we should be empowered to make decisions for our children's education in line with what's best for them, as education is about the formation of children – indeed, each particular child in his or her particularity. Systems of schooling and taxation regimes should support that, not the other way round.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote in favor of SB 2303 and similar bills that empower parents to exercise options in education.

We appreciate your service to our State and your time spent in consideration of this bill.

Best,

Dr. Leroy & Mrs. Kari Huizenga