

Jordan Wald, 105 30th St NW Minot, ND 58703
Re: Senate Bill 2303
Senate Education Committee
February 4th, 2025

Chairwoman Axtman and members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 2303. Personally, my journey in private education started from the time I was in kindergarten, to my second year in College at the University of Mary in Bismarck. My parents were by no means wealthy; a cabinet maker and a daycare provider. At the time, I didn't realize the sacrifice they made providing a Catholic education to me and my four siblings. I thank God every day they did.

As an adult now, I realize it was my private Catholic education that instilled in me the tools necessary to face the adversities we inevitably will face in our communities. Not the adversities that we all are familiar with, I am talking about the adversities you don't think about because they are too heavy to let them in your head. Adversities like, putting a child down for a nap and never seeing him wake-up, or doctoring with your ailing father for years watching his kidneys fail, giving the news to your wife that none of the five kids are a match for donation, and then watching her go through tests and surgery to donate her kidney to your father; all so he can live to see your children grow. A wife who received the same private education I did. Not speaking to your bother for years due to problems with addiction, watching his niece and nephews pray each day on the way to school that he remembers his foundation of faith. The very school they learned, in part, to pray like that. The adversities that if the members of our communities had the tools to deal with, would make all our communities exponentially better. As depression and anxiety rates skyrocket among our youth, don't you think we are at the point where we need to try anything to arm our kids with all weapons necessary to combat this growing problem? You're right, its not guaranteed these tools are a result of private education, but more affordable access to private Catholic education gives us a heck of a lot better chance. Its occurred to me, my foundations taught at home and reinforced at school gave me what was needed to face the adversities in my life and not be crushed by them.

In closing my testimony, I want to point out that North Dakotans vote overwhelmingly for conservative principles because they believe it is best for the common good. I don't know of a more foundationally conservative principle than the option for a parent to choose the direction of education of their children. Or the principle of a private institution filling a need in our communities supported only by those that use it and believe in its mission. All while decreasing the burden on our state option to fill a similar need. If the citizens clearly support ND conservatism year after year, why is there so much discussion over whether or not to supportively legislate my parental right to direct the education of my children? So that they can be formed not only in education, but formed as humans with the virtues, civic and otherwise, we instill as parents in partnership with our private school. I ask you to support Senate Bill 2303. Take the conservative approach in allowing parents the choice to arm our kids with the tools I am grateful I received. My parents sacrificed everything to provide for me, but the sad part is that it's not always an option for everyone. I feel the direction of your child's education should be an option for every parent should they see the unmatched value in private education that I do. This starts with eliminating the burdens that hinder the choice parents have.

Thank you for your time and your service to our great state,

Jordan Wald, Minot, ND