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SB2353 Testimony to Senate Education Committee

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Chairman Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record, my name is John Porter, and I am the Executive Director of the South East Education Cooperative (SEEC). SEEC is one of six Regional Education Associations (REAs) which provides a wide range of services in the areas of professional development and school improvement to our 32 public school district members.

I'm writing to urge your support of SB 2353, which streamlines the contracting process between the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and REAs for programs and services that support K-12 school districts across North Dakota. Since their inception in 2005, REAs have partnered with DPI to implement statewide initiatives that benefit our schools. Because of their regional presence, strong relationships with districts, and ability to leverage funding efficiently, REAs are uniquely positioned to manage and deliver these essential services.

Through this partnership, REAs have led statewide efforts such as the Comprehensive State Literacy Development (CLSD) grant, Targeted and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (TSI/CSI), the Science of Reading initiative, and Math in North Dakota professional development. By collaborating on these initiatives, we have built in-state expertise, reduced reliance on out-of-state vendors, and ensured professional development and school improvement efforts are regionally accessible and sustainable.

I respectfully urge your support for SB 2353 to ensure continued efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability in supporting North Dakota schools.

John Porter
Executive Director