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ND Legislature  
69<sup>th</sup> Assembly

RE: SB 2400

Though there are a few things about this bill and how it relates to the establishment of educational savings accounts (ESAs) that I appreciate, I am writing today in opposition of SB 2400.

First, I appreciate the clear delineation of what the ESA money can be used for though I think that several of the items could also apply to public school students. Second, I appreciate the tiered payments in accordance with income levels as it favors those facing financial obstacles to a non-public education and not just parents who want money for a choice they've already made and wish they didn't have to finance. Likewise, I think the \$1000 amount for home education is appropriate considering the affordability of home education. Lastly, I value the regulatory limits set forth on lines 12 through 14 on page six.

Thank you for those thoughtful considerations in writing this bill.

However, ESAs are a slippery slope that I and most other homeschoolers do not want to slide down. We have fought long and hard for the freedoms we have to educate our children without state oversight and without state interference.

I am the president of Tricity Home Educators Association serving 150 families which equates to about 475 students. We are not the only support group in the Bismarck area and not every homeschooling family is a member. The majority of homeschoolers with whom I have contact do not want state money because they've seen the regulations that quickly follow.

For example, this bill states that those attending participating schools will have to take standardized testing. Currently, homeschoolers can opt out of standardized testing and this bill is unclear whether homeschoolers will forfeit their opt-out upon taking state money.

Additionally lines 15 – 17 of page six are vague as to what regulations may be “necessary to enforce the requirements of” this program. Because the bill does not guarantee the rights of and protections for North Dakota homeschoolers, and is ominously vague as to what could be required later, I am suspect of the potential for government overreach into home education and honestly all non-public education.

For these reasons, I encourage a “do not pass” on this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Kristy Rose