



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1244

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
February 17, 2025

Dear Chairman Weber and honorable members of the Senate Finance and Tax Committee,

My name is Mark Jorritsma and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of House Bill 1244 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

Home education, or home schooling if you will, has a lot of positive attributes. It is a very effective and efficient way to educate one’s children, while at the same time instilling family values in a manner not always possible in public school settings. Secondly, there are very remote parts of North Dakota where the nearest public school may be quite a distance from a student’s home, which can create significant problems, particularly considering our winter weather. Finally, parents understand the different learning styles of each of their children, and they are frankly best equipped to educate them.

On a personal note, our family saw all these benefits firsthand. We chose to homeschool our children for a number of years, while my wife paused her career. Did it represent a financial burden to us? Absolutely. And while we would do it again in a heartbeat, the financial ramifications were significant for our family. It would have been a great help to have supplemental funding for homeschool expenses during these years, as proposed in this bill.

Our organization strongly supports this bill, but when it was first introduced, we believed there were a couple of points that could use additional clarification. First, it stated that the tax credit would be \$10,000. We were unsure where this number came from or what its basis was. The House Finance and Taxation Committee changed this amount to \$1,000, which seems more reasonable.

Secondly, the bill states that Qualified Educational Expenses are, “items used directly for home education”. Our question is whether some department or agency will require approval of these expenses. It may be helpful to explicitly specify this in the bill, rather than put this burden on

1515 Burnt Boat Dr., Suite C-148, Bismarck, ND 58503
mark@Ndfamilyalliance.org
701-355-6425
www.ndfamilyalliance.org



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the Tax Commissioner to determine the best course of action when designing acceptable tax credit parameters.

As stated above, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action is strongly supportive of this bill. We also believe the bill would be a building block that is consistent with Governor Armstrong's push for educational choice. For all these reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action asks that you please render a "DO PASS" on House Bill 1244. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony, and feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Mark Jorritsma
Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action