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Salvatore Rickford
Operator's Signature

10/3/03
Date

2003 HOUSE EDUCATION
HB 1259

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10/3/03
Date

2003 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HB 1259
House Education Committee

☐ Conference Committee

Hearing Date January 22, 2003

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1	x		855- 4370
		x	88-616
Committee Clerk Signature <i>Linda Fiechter</i>			

Minutes: Chairman Kelsch opened he hearing on HB1259

Rep. Meler, District 32

I have introduced this bill at the request of my constituent, Sonna Anderson. In researching this issue I learned that the Legislature has removed the limitations on salaries paid to local political subdivisions. Most recently for city commissioners in the last session. I was surprised to learn that there is a vast differences in salaries paid to our public servants, who give their time and talent to the public good. I encourage you to listen to the testimony offered on this bill and to vote a DO PASS out of committee.

(988) Sonna Anderson, President of the Bismarck Public School Board, See Attached

Testimony

(1367) Rep. Sitte : Would it be wise to place a cap on the salaries?

Anderson: I can't tell you what has been done across at he state I know that no school pays for a full time position. I don't see a need for a cap, it has to fit in our budgets are public.

Chairman Kelsch: You must stay within your budgets.

La Costa Rickford
Operator's Signature

10/3/03
Date

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House Education Committee

Bill/Resolution Number HB1259

Hearing Date January 22, 2003

Rep. Hawken: Fargo doesn't pay any salary, Moorhead people get over \$3,000 a year.

Rep. Mueller: Why did you run for the school board?

Anderson: When I ran there was some there heated issues and I felt the call to step forward.

Rep. Mueller: The compensation that you receive, is that a factor for you to run?

Anderson: Not when I ran, But for some they won't run because of the compensation isn't enough for their situation.

Chairman Kelsch: Why don't you tell the committee about the last election.

Anderson: The last election in Bismarck, we had 4 openings on a 5 person board. Two were running unopposed and one position was fill 1 week ahead of the deadline and then people put their names in for a write in.

Chairman Kelsch: As large as Bismarck is they could not get candidates to fill the position.

Rep. Hanson: What do you expect the salary to be?

Anderson: I would feel comfortable with 300/400/500 per month. We meet a lot and we may attract more candidates if the salary compensated for the time.

(1826) Ken Astrup, Jamestown School Board President

I am here in Support of HB 1259 for a couple of reasons. First, today school districts in the state are responsible for budgets and a large number of employees which are larger than most city and county governments that they are located in. Jamestown city council members receive \$600/month, they meet approx. 40 times a year and they have a budget about the size of ours, but with fewer employees. The county commissioners receive \$901.76/month, plus health insurance benefits, their budget is about the size of the school district and they also have far less employees.

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House Education Committee
Bill/Resolution Number HB1259
Hearing Date January 22, 2003

The second issue is the compensation for the amount of time and effort to be a board member.

There is more than just a meeting a month, the fewest board meetings I have had in a given year is 43, during the last four years it has averaged 68 meetings. I know of no board members who runs for the compensation. I would believe that most board members run for the same reason, for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our children. I ask for your support on this bill with a DO PASS.

(2000) Parrell Grossman, Bismarck Public School Board Member, See Attached Testimony
Chairman Kelsch Explain the last election in Bismarck.

Grossman: Described the lack of any candidates, lack of interest and several possible candidates were concerned with the amount of commitment time and compensation.

Rep. Meier: The recent year the situation of Riverside and Richholt, how many hours did you designate to this situation alone.

Grossman: This was a very intense period, with visiting with parents, research, meetings, hearings, etc. Each of us put many hours into this decision. The were many people that are affected by our decision.

Rep. Hanson You are probably not the only one who is loosing money per day on elected positions. When I started we were paid \$5/day, even at \$75 /day I was loosing about \$3,000 a session to come out here..

Grossman: I understand that kind of compensation. We are looking at the comparison just to make it more equal.

Rep. Mueller how do you think your constituents are going to receive the word about the increase of the money paid.

LaCosta Rickford
Operator's Signature

10/3/03
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House Education Committee
Bill/Resolution Number HB1259
Hearing Date January 22, 2003

Grossman: I think that is a good question. I feel that for the most part it will be well received. I think that there will always be individuals who will say that he/she choose to serve in that position, and he/she should not be doing it for the compensation. We will be opened up for criticism.

(3400) Barbara Norby, NDSBA, See Attached Testimony .

Rep Hawken: There are some states they have FTE, making \$25,000 with an office, staff and benefits, are there some states still doing this?

Norby: Yes there are some states that are doing this such as California and Florida.

Rep. Mueller Are we all over the board on compensation, do some do a flat amount for meeting?

Norby: I do not know the exact amount of districts. Some are paid \$25/meeting some \$1000/yr. less social security and income taxes.

Nancy Sand, NDEA

The work that the school board does is tremendous. II feel that the school boards will be very careful with this privilege of raising their compensation, they have to answer to their constituents.

Dan Kuntz, Bismarck School Board

I took this job, as a volunteer. We have had to make some very difficult decisions, termination's, school closings, budget. But I am concerned about the inability to attract people to the position. I have the flexibility and so do some of the other members. But there may be others who do not have the flexibility and time away from their jobs could prove hardship and they will need the compensation.

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House Education Committee

Bill/Resolution Number HB1259

Hearing Date January 22, 2003

OPPOSITION: none

Closed hearing

Opened the committee work:

Rep. Meier motioned for a DO PASS on HB 1259, Rep. Haas seconded

Discussion:

Rep. Hanson Any caps for any other county commissioners, city council?

Rep. Hawken: I found the city people and there is no caps, nothing on county pay.

Rep. Haas Is this a little presumptuous of us to think that we have to control what the maximum the school board can vote to pay themselves, when we in the legislature have total control over our salary?

Rep. Hanson the Governor can veto our bill, where the city council and county commissioners can't.

Rep. Solberg School boards members have a position that is equally thankless and just a little figure here, the Bismarck school board members received approx. \$3/hour.

Rep. Mueller I'm going to stand in opposition of 1259 for the simple fact that this is about volunteerism. Service learning is all about teaching our young people to become involved for the experience not for the money.

Rep. Sitte I do respect you opinion Rep. Mueller, but what happens if we don't give school boards this option, with only people who are attorney, who can take time out of their day to participate. I would like to see it more open for the average citizens who maybe have to leave a small business or job to attend.

DO PASS 11-1-2 Rep. Meier will carry the bill to the floor.

FISCAL NOTE STATEMENT

House Bill or Resolution No. 1259

This bill or resolution appears to affect revenues, expenditures, or fiscal liability of counties, cities, or school districts. However, no state agency has primary responsibility for compiling and maintaining the information necessary for the proper preparation of a fiscal note regarding this bill or resolution. Pursuant to Joint Rule 502, this statement meets the fiscal note requirement.

John Walstad
Code Revisor

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10/3/03
Date

Date: 1/22/03
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2003 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

House HOUSE EDUCATION Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 1259

Action Taken DO PASS

Motion Made By Meier Seconded By Haas

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Kelsch	✓				
Rep. Johnson	✓				
Rep. Nelson	A				
Rep. Haas	✓				
Rep. Hawken	✓				
Rep. Herbel		A			
Rep. Meier	✓				
Rep. Norland	✓				
Rep. Sitte	✓				
Rep. Hanson	✓				
Rep. Hunsakor	✓				
Rep. Mueller		✓			
Rep. Solberg	✓				
Rep. Williams	✓				

Total (Yes) 11 No 1

Absent 2

Floor Assignment Meier

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)
January 24, 2003 10:06 a.m.

Module No: HR-14-1029
Carrier: Meier
Insert LC: . Title: .

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1259: Education Committee (Rep. R. Kelsch, Chairman) recommends DO PASS
(11 YEAS, 1 NAY, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1259 was placed on the
Eleventh order on the calendar.

(2) DESK, (3) COMM

Page No. 1

HR-14-1029

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2003 SENATE EDUCATION

HB 1259

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2003 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HB 1259

Senate Education Committee

☐ Conference Committee

Hearing Date 3-11-03

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1	x		28.0 - end
1		x	0 - 7.7, 34.9 - end
2	x		0 - 4.0
Committee Clerk Signature <i>Sandra Johnson</i>			

Minutes: CHAIRMAN FREBORG called the committee to order. Roll Call was taken with all (6) members present.

CHAIRMAN FREBORG opened the hearing on HB 1259 which relates to the salary of school board members.

Testimony in support of HB 1259:

REPRESENTATIVE LISA MEIER, Dist. 32, supports this bill. It was introduced on behalf of Bismarck school board president, Sonna Anderson.

SONNA ANDERSON, President Bismarck School Board, presented testimony. (see attached).

SENATOR FLAKOLL asked what procedure would be used to increase the salaries of school board members. MS. ANDERSON stated it would be put in the budget process.

SENATOR LEE asked what a reasonable package would be for members. MS. ANDERSON feels a salary similar to a city commissioner would be appropriate, about \$400 - 500 per month.

La Costa Rickford
Operator's Signature

10/3/03
Date

Page 2

Senate Education Committee
Bill/Resolution Number HB 1259
Hearing Date 3-11-03

SENATOR COOK asked if the public can access the information on the Board as to their salaries and expenses. MS. ANDERSON stated an interested party could call the business manager and the information should be readily available.

PARRELL GROSSMAN, Bismarck School Board member, presented testimony. (see attached)

CHRISTY ZENTZ stated her support for the bill. It is difficult to have willing candidates commit so much personal time with so little compensation.

CHAIRMAN FREBORG asked SONNA ANDERSON how many official meetings her Board has per year. She stated they have about 42 official meetings and about 40 unofficial meetings. Most meetings last about 3 hours.

SENATOR FLAKOLL asked if MS. ANDERSON would envision any school board setting their salary too high without a cap being put on it. She stated no. She feels they are conscious of the wishes of the people and would not do what the general public wouldn't want.

SENATOR FREBORG asked what she would envision as a fair hourly wage, if it were paid that way. She feels \$12 - 15 would be fair.

BEV NIELSON, NDSBA, presented written testimony in support of HB 1259. (see attached)

There was no opposition to HB 1259.

The hearing was closed on HB 1259.

Tape 1, Side B, 34.9 - end, Tape 2, Side A, 0 - 4.0

SENATOR FREBORG feels taking the limits off salaries of school board members would be okay. He feels this gives more local control. However, he has some concerns about board members raising their own salaries too much. He feels the people who elect the board should be able to see what the compensation of the members is and what expenses are being paid.

La Costa Rickford
Operator's Signature

10/3/03
Date

Page 3

Senate Education Committee

Bill/Resolution Number HB 1259

Hearing Date 3-11-03

SENATOR COOK has many questions. He feels some schools, especially large one, have more time spent and different issues to deal with. He feels boards who set their own salaries could abuse it. He recalls that some years ago, it was stated that for a person to serve on the board, they needed to be volunteers. However, he does feel the members should be compensated.

SENATOR LEE feels board members are usually conservative with their own salaries. He doesn't have a great concern with allowing the boards to set their own salary.

SENATOR FREBORG stated there are many options in setting compensation.

SENATOR COOK stated if the limit is set by the legislature, then the legislature takes the full responsibility if there is a disgruntled member or constituent. If we take the cap off, he would want to make sure the total compensation package is available to the voters of the district.

SENATOR FLAKOLL asked how exact would the legislature want to scrutinize. Perhaps another cell should be added to the report.

SENATOR FLAKOLL moved a DO PASS. Seconded by SENATOR LEE.

Roll Call Vote: 3 YES. 2 NO. 1 Absent. SENATOR TAYLOR will be allowed to vote.

Discussion on bill and circumstances in Bismarck while waiting for Senator Taylor.

FINAL ROLL CALL VOTE: 4 YES. 2 NO. 0 ABSENT.

Carrier: SENATOR FLAKOLL

Date: 3/11/03

Roll Call Vote #: /

2003 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1481259

Senate **EDUCATION** **Committee**

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Do Pass

Motion Made By Sen. Flukoll Seconded By Sen. Lee

[illegible]

Total (Yes) ~~3~~ 4 No 2

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Sen. Flakoll

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

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Date _____

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)
March 11, 2003 1:24 p.m.

Module No: SR-43-4446
Carrier: Flekoll
Insert LC: . Title: .

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1259: Education Committee (Sen. Freborg, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS**
(4 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1259 was placed on the
Fourteenth order on the calendar.

(2) DESK, (3) COMM

Page No. 1

SR-43-4446

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10/3/03
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2003 TESTIMONY

HB 1259

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10/3/03
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Bismarck Public Schools

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SONNA ANDERSON
PRESIDENT

MARCIA OLSON
VICE PRESIDENT

PARRELL GROSSMAN

DANIEL KUNTZ

ARUNA SETH

Testimony in support of HB 1259
January 22, 2003

MADAM CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

My name is Sonna Anderson and I am President of the Bismarck Public School Board.

I was first elected to the school board in 1994, and have served ever since. Potential recall notwithstanding, I plan to serve several more years.

Bismarck is a large school district, with 10,500 students; 1,300 employees; 25 buildings and facility sites and a budget of \$64 Million dollars. We have five members on our school board. My fellow board members and I estimate that we spend an average of 25 to 30 hours per month on school board matters. We rotate the office of President, and that person spends an additional 3 to 5 hours per month.

These hours include preparation time for and attendance at the two regular monthly meetings; information and background sessions; budget meetings; public hearings; expulsion hearings; non-renewal hearings (an all nighter can throw the monthly average way out of wack); negotiation sessions; meetings with various sub committees; time spent visiting schools and attending school staff meetings; time spent evaluating the superintendent; conducting long range planning sessions; and handling parent, student, teacher and public concerns.

Page 1 of 4

La Costa Rickford
Operator's Signature

10/3/03
Date

In light of issues which are looming on the horizon, such as school consolidations, building improvements, teacher negotiations, public involvement and the upcoming provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, I see the demands on school board members across the state increasing.

Most of the members of our board have full time jobs, careers and families. We try to arrange school board meeting time outside our regular work schedules, but it is not always possible. When we need to meet with school staff, we usually have to meet during their work day. Those of us who are self employed or have very flexible schedules are able to extend our lunch hours, or flex for that 3:30 or 4 pm meeting, but over the years, many of our board members have to use their limited personal vacation time from their jobs for school board business.

I believe that we each have an obligation to use our gifts for the greater good and I believe that public service has many, non-monetary rewards. However, I am struck by the great discrepancy between the pay of public servants in my little corner of North Dakota. Burleigh County Commissioners are paid \$996.00 per month, with the option to participate in the county health insurance benefit package. Bismarck City Commissioners are paid \$600.00 per month and the Mayor of Bismarck receives \$1100.00 per month. Bismarck Park Board members receive \$100.00 per month plus free access (for life) to all of the park district facilities, including all golf courses, swimming pools and athletic centers. Bismarck School Board members receive \$1,000.00 per year, or \$83.00 per month, plus passes to the district athletic events. I am not surprised that more people want to serve as commissioners or park board members than school board members.

Page 2 of 4

John Costa Rickford
Operator's signature

10/3/03
Date

Contrary to popular belief, serving on the school board, at least in Bismarck, is NOT a thankless job. I have several people come up to me every month and thank me for the work the school board does. However, the "thanks" is frequently followed with a comment along the lines of "you couldn't pay me enough to take that job." That sentiment plays out when it comes time to fill vacancies on the school board.

In the past nine years, there have been very few contested elections for school board in Bismarck. A few years ago, we had one member who was elected one June and resigned a few months later because he could not commit enough of his time to the job. As a result, my fellow board members and I try to be very up front with prospective members as to what the job entails while still encouraging them to run.

When there are openings on the school board, I know that there are civic leaders who are out and about actively recruiting potential candidates to run for the school board. Many seem interested, but most will not come forward without some arm twisting. If raising the salary for school board members would help encourage more citizens to step forward to seek this important post, then I think it is time to address the salary issue.

House Bill 1259 does not require any school board to set any particular salary, it does not require a school board to increase the existing salary. It does not require that salaries be uniform across the state. It requires no state funding or appropriation. House Bill 1259 simply allows each of the school boards to look at its own resources and set a salary that is appropriate for the district.

Page 3 of 4

La Costa Rickford
Operator's Signature

10/3/03
Date

The checks and balances will come with the vote of the people who WE represent, the men and women, parents and teachers who live in our respective communities and who place their trust in us, their school board members, to be sound stewards of the public funds for public education.

I urge you to vote a "DO PASS" for House Bill 1259.

Sonna Anderson, President,
Bismarck Public School Board
sonna@btinet.net

Page 4 of 4

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10/3/03
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EDUCATION COMMITTEE
RAEANN G. KELSCH, CHAIRMAN
JANUARY 22, 2003

TESTIMONY BY
PARRELL D. GROSSMAN
BISMARCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER
IN SUPPORT OF
HOUSE BILL NO. 1259

Chairman Kelsch and members of the House Education Committee. I am Parrell Grossman, a member of the Bismarck School Board. I am pleased to be employed by the Attorney General. However, I do not appear on behalf of the Attorney General. I appear on my personal time and my position is not the position of the Attorney General. I appear in my capacity as a Bismarck school board member and on my own behalf.

There are many school board members throughout the state that have served for many years and are far more qualified than me to address the commitments of a school board member. I only offer you my perspective because I am a new school board member and I am here in Bismarck and available to support this legislation. I was newly elected to serve on the Bismarck School Board in June 2002 and I greatly appreciate serving in this position.

I don't hold this position for the money. The current maximum salary of \$1,000 per year didn't entice me and any substantial increase would make, if any, only a negligible difference. Other than spending time with my family, I can't think of anything I do that is more important, rewarding or enjoyable.

Like you and many others I have a demanding professional life and a busy personal life. I sought a two-year term rather than a four-year term to assess the impact of this commitment. Although I enjoy this position, my most frequent comment about serving on the school board is, "I love this job but it is a huge commitment."

I am fortunate to serve with some very experienced, knowledgeable and qualified board members. For many years these individuals have worked 25 hours or more per month on a broad range of duties including board meetings, committee meetings, public hearings, school visitations *et cetera*. That commitment and the time contributions will substantially increase as school board members throughout the state work to implement the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

I can't imagine, as an inexperienced board member, making decisions without the guidance and participation of more experienced board members. Yet, these experienced school board members across the state could spend their productive hours on matters with personal gain. Instead, they have chosen to serve on the

school board because of their commitment to education. Nonetheless, it is important and appropriate to recognize the commitment of school board members with the recognition of some compensation commensurate with the professional and personal sacrifices. These sacrifices apply across the state regardless of community or occupation.

I'm fortunate that my employer supports me in serving as a school board member. He allows me, on short notice, to take annual leave for weekly meetings, *et cetera*, as well as extended leave for training conferences and other more time-consuming commitments. My employer certainly recognizes that this annual leave is necessary. Nonetheless, it is a distraction from my employment obligations during ordinary working hours. Many school board members may not have vacation hours to use, or are self-employed and the time commitment is at significant personal expense. I know that you, as legislators, understand the commitment of public service far more than I can suggest or have experienced.

As you are aware, other public officials in our communities often receive greater compensation appropriate with their duties and responsibilities, as determined at the local level. This legislation would permit local communities to also decide school board compensation.

Allowing each school district the ability to determine appropriate compensation for its school board members will, among other things, help ensure that qualified candidates seek and continue to hold these positions. In this manner, school districts and the affected communities will continue to ensure that the school boards are effectively furthering the priorities you have established for education in this state.

For these reasons, the Bismarck School Board and I respectfully urge this committee to give House Bill 1259 a "do pass" recommendation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be pleased to try and answer any questions.



**NORTH DAKOTA
SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION**
INCORPORATED

Excellence in North Dakota public education through local school board governance

HB 1259

Testimony for Education Committee hearing January 22, 2003.

Representative Kelsch and members of the committee:

My name is Barbara Norby and I represent the North Dakota School Boards Association. I am testifying in favor of House Bill 1259. While we did not solicit this bill, we salute Representative Meier and her colleagues for recognizing the many hours devoted to North Dakota children by school board members all across the state.

Districts currently have a variety of ways in which they compensate their members. Some pay a certain amount per board meeting. Other districts also count committee meetings and negotiations sessions. Some have even considered reimbursing members for lost wages when they attend conferences such as our annual convention or seminars. Taking into consideration the fact that school board members don't run for the board because of the good pay, it only seems fair that each local board be allowed to determine their compensation.

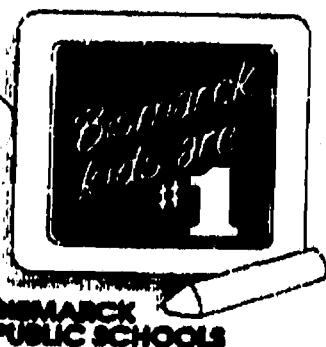
We respectfully request a Do Pass on House Bill 1259.

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PA'YRELL GROSSMAN

DANIEL KUNTZ

ARUNA SETH

Testimony in support of HB 1259
March 11, 2003

HONORABLE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

My name is Sonna Anderson and I am President of the Bismarck Public School Board.

I was first elected to the school board in 1994, and have served ever since. Although I and two of my fellow board members are presently subject to a recall election scheduled for May 6, 2003, I plan to serve several more years.

Bismarck is a large school district, with 10,500 students; 1,300 employees; 25 building and facility sites and a budget of \$64 Million dollars. We have five members on our school board. My fellow board members and I estimate that we spend an average of 25 to 30 hours per month on school board matters. We rotate the office of President, and that person spends an additional 3 to 5 hours per month.

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In light of issues which are looming on the horizon, such as school consolidations, building improvements, teacher compensation, public involvement and the upcoming provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, I see the demands on school board members across the state increasing.

Most of the members of our board have full time jobs, careers and families. We try to arrange school board meeting time outside our regular work schedules, but it is not always possible. When we need to meet with school staff, we usually have to meet during their work day. Those of us who are self employed or have very flexible schedules are able to extend our lunch hours, or flex for that 3:30 or 4 pm meeting, but over the years, many of our board members have to use their limited personal vacation time from their jobs for school board business.

I believe that we each have an obligation to use our gifts for the greater good and I believe that public service has many, non-monetary rewards. However, I am struck by the great discrepancy between the pay of public servants in my little corner of North Dakota. Burleigh County Commissioners are paid \$996.00 per month, with the option to participate in the county health insurance benefit package. Bismarck City Commissioners are paid \$600.00 per month and the Mayor of Bismarck receives \$1100.00 per month. Bismarck Park Board members receive \$100.00 per month plus free access (for life) to all of the park district facilities, including all golf courses, swimming pools and athletic centers. Bismarck School Board members receive \$1,000.00 per year, or \$83.00 per month, plus passes to the district athletic events. I am not surprised that more people want to serve as commissioners or park board members than school board members.

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Contrary to popular belief, serving on the school board, at least in Bismarck, is NOT a thankless job. I have several people come up to me every month and thank me for the work the school board does. However, the "thanks" is frequently followed with a comment along the lines of "you couldn't pay me enough to take that job." That sentiment plays out when it comes time to fill vacancies on the school board.

In the past nine years, there have been very few contested elections for school board in Bismarck. A few years ago, we had one member who was elected one June and resigned a few months later because he could not commit enough of his time to the job. As a result, my fellow board members and I try to be very up front with prospective members as to what the job entails while still encouraging them to run.

When there are openings on the school board, I know that there are civic leaders who are out and about actively recruiting potential candidates to run for the school board. Many seem interested, but most will not come forward without some arm twisting. During the last regular election held in June of 2002, one position had NO candidates who had officially declared for the position in time to get their name on the ballot, so one position was filled by write in candidates. Having spent so much time on educational matters yourselves, I think you'll have to agree that it is scary to think that people are so reluctant to step up to the plate to serve on the school boards in our communities. Speaking from experience, it was positively scary in Bismarck. wondering who might be interested enough to wage a write in campaign or wondering what would happen if NO ONE was elected?

If raising the salary for school board members would help encourage more citizens to step forward to seek this important post, then I think it is time to address the salary issue.

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House Bill 1259 does not require any school board to set any particular salary, it does not require a school board to increase the existing salary. It does not require that salaries be uniform across the state. It requires no state funding or appropriation. House Bill 1259 simply allows each of the school boards to look at its own resources and set a salary that is appropriate for the district.

The checks and balances will come with the vote of the people who WE represent, the men and women, parents and teachers who live in our respective communities and who place their trust in us, their school board members, to be sound stewards of the public funds for public education.

I urge you to vote a "DO PASS" for House Bill 1259.

Sonna Anderson, President,
Bismarck Public School Board
sonna@btinet.net

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SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
LAYTON W. FREBORG, CHAIRMAN
MARCH 11, 2003

TESTIMONY BY
PARRELL D. GROSSMAN
BISMARCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER
IN SUPPORT OF
HOUSE BILL NO. 1259

Chairman Freborg and members of the Senate Education Committee. I am Parrell Grossman, a member of the Bismarck School Board. The Attorney General employs me as an Assistant Attorney General. However, I do not appear on behalf of the Attorney General. My position is not the position of the Attorney General. I appear on my personal time. I appear in support of House Bill No. 1258 in my capacity as a Bismarck school board member.

There are many school board members throughout the state that have served for many years and are far more qualified than me to address the commitments of a school board member. I only offer this committee my perspective because I am a new school board member and I am here in Bismarck and available to support this legislation. I was newly elected to serve on the Bismarck School Board in June 2002 and I greatly appreciate serving in this position!

I do not serve as a school board member for the compensation. The current maximum salary of \$1,000 per year didn't entice me to this position. Frankly, at this stage in my life and career, any increase would make, if any, only a negligible difference. Other than spending time with my spouse and three children, I can't think of anything I do that is more important, rewarding or enjoyable.

I am in the position of a school board member because my family and I have benefited from this state and this community for many years and I have watched others volunteer their time and talents to improve the quality of life, community and education. It is now my turn now because I feel I have the education, experiences and abilities that, hopefully, will allow me to return some of the contributions I have received.

Like you and many others I have a demanding professional life and a busy personal life. I sought a two-year term rather than a four-year term to assess the impact of this commitment on my professional and personal life. I enjoy this position immensely. However, my most frequent comment about serving on the school board is, "I love this job but it is a huge commitment."

I am fortunate to serve with some very experienced, knowledgeable and qualified board members. For many years these individuals have worked 25 hours or more per

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month on a broad range of duties including board meetings, committee meetings, public hearings, school visitations et cetera. That commitment and the time contributions will substantially increase as school board members throughout the state work to implement the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

I can't imagine, as an inexperienced board member, making decisions without the guidance and participation of more experienced board members. Yet, these experienced school board members across the state could spend their productive hours on matters with personal gain or enjoyment. Instead, they have chosen to serve on the school board because of their commitment to education. Nonetheless, it is important and appropriate to recognize the commitment of school board members with the recognition of some compensation commensurate with the professional and personal sacrifices. These sacrifices apply across the state regardless of community or occupation.

I'm fortunate that my employer, the Attorney General, supports me in serving as a school board member. He allows me, on short notice, to take annual leave for weekly meetings, et cetera, as well as extended leave for training conferences and other more time-consuming commitments. My employer certainly recognizes this leave and other commitments are a necessary part of being a school board member. Nonetheless, it is a distraction from my employment obligations during ordinary and other working hours, and it often conflicts with other professional responsibilities or obligations. Regardless of available annual leave hours, the responsibilities of my position require that I make up many of those school board hours with other productive hours. Many school board members may not have vacation hours to use, or are self-employed and the time commitment is at significant personal expense. I know that you, as legislators, keenly understand the commitment of public service far more than I can either suggest or have experienced.

As you are aware, other public officials in our communities often receive greater compensation appropriate with their duties and responsibilities, as determined at the local level. This legislation would permit local communities to also decide school board compensation.

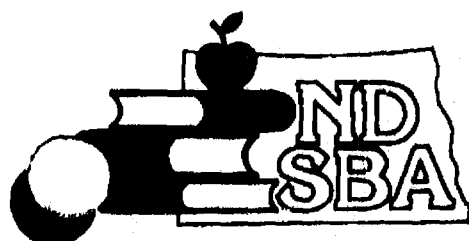
I am particularly concerned that the current compensation for school board members may discourage many qualified and experienced individuals from seeking or retaining positions as school board members. It often can be difficult to attract qualified candidates to these positions. Most candidates will not seek the position for the compensation. Nonetheless, the compensation might make a difference to someone that is otherwise inclined to consider this public service.

Allowing each school district the ability to determine appropriate compensation for its school board members will, among other things, help ensure that qualified candidates

seek and continue to hold these positions. In this manner, school districts and the affected communities will continue to ensure that the school boards are effectively furthering the priorities you have established for education in this state.

For these reasons, the Bismarck School Board and I respectfully urge this committee to give House Bill 1259 a "do pass" recommendation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be pleased to try and answer any questions.



**NORTH DAKOTA
SCHOOL BOARDS
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Excellence in North Dakota public education through local school board governance

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

HB1259

Bev Nielson, North Dakota School Boards Association

NDSBA supports HB1259. It is our understanding that School Boards are the only political subdivisions that still have a statutory cap on their compensation for service. It is time to show them the same trust and respect enjoyed by other elected bodies.

School Board members serve hundreds of hours a year at regular board meetings, negotiations, committees, superintendent search processes and numerous other obligatory meetings.

It seems reasonable that if school board members' elected counterparts in the Legislature, Counties, Townships, and Cities can responsibly set their own compensation, school board members certainly can do the same.

NDSBA asks for your favorable consideration of HB1259.

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