

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1356
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

January 27, 2021

**By: Jim Upgren, Assistant Director, Office of School Approval and Opportunity
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North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Chairman Owens and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Upgren, Assistant Director in the Office of School Approval and Opportunity with the Department of Public Instruction. I am here on behalf of the department to speak in support of HB 1356.

NDDPI supports the idea of youth patriotic societies such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts being allowed into schools to introduce themselves and promote their organizations to prospective members. Doing so will give the students the opportunity to make an informed choice of whether or not they wish to participate in the organization.

The department also supports the idea that not all learning takes place within the walls of a classroom. For example, another bill, HB 1478 (which NDDPI supports), would allow schools to issue credit for an educational opportunity that takes place outside of the classroom. This could potentially mean that a student could receive school credit for completing an Eagle Scout project, for example. With patriotic societies having the opportunity come to schools to speak to prospective members, along with schools being able to allow projects completed by students as

part of those organizations to count for credit, HB 1356 would benefit schools, students, and the patriot societies alike.

NDDPI supports HB 1356, and should amendments be proposed that would add additional patriot society groups to the bill or ask NDDPI to help vet potential patriot society groups under this section, we would be happy to do so.

Chairman Owens and Members of the Committee that concludes my prepared testimony and I will stand for any questions that you may have.