

Senate Finance and Taxation Committee
Chairman Jessica Bell
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SB 2288

Chairman Bell and members of the Senate Finance and Taxation Committee, my name is Shane Goettle and I am here today as a lobbyist for the State Association of Nonpublic Schools.

The nonpublic schools in North Dakota are a vital component to the education framework in our state. Very often, public and nonpublic schools work together very well. We have experienced that in many ways, such as through North Dakota high school activities and, more recently, in the distribution of CARES ACT dollars to meet the challenges both public and nonpublic school experienced from the threat posed by COVID-19.

When a family chooses a nonpublic school option for their child, it does generate public savings. In the 2019-20 school year, for example, with 6,770 students, the nonpublic schools saved North Dakota taxpayers in excess of \$160 million dollars* per biennium. These dollars are then available for other public purposes.

With regard to SB 2288 which you have before you today, the State Association of Nonpublic Schools supports any effort to empower parental choice in education. In SB 2288, taxpayers would be allowed a credit against their state income tax liability for contributions to a scholarship granting organization or SGO. Scholarships would be granted to students who meet the SGO's own eligibility criteria.

On behalf of 6,770 students in nonpublic schools in North Dakota and their parents we ask for your support of HB SB 2288. Thank You.

**NDDPI School Finance Facts (Fall 2019) Non-Public enrollment of 6,770 students X average cost of education per pupil \$12,435 X 2 years.*