

January 31, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Emily Bakken and I am writing in relation to HB1532, which concerns the partial reimbursement of tuition spent at private schools. I am writing in support of HB1532 as a mother of a young, growing family in the Bismarck area. I support HB1532 for a myriad of reasons, including – but not limited to:

- I grew up in a smaller community where I attended public school, and my father was the elementary school principal for almost all my time there. Although I have no issues with public schools, my main concern for my children was getting lost in the class sizes – which are easily as large as my entire graduating class growing up. Arguably, smaller class sizes allow for students to develop and learn more effectively, and in larger communities (especially those that have the population to support private schools) this just isn't seen in the public school classrooms. This bill will allow more families to choose the course for their children that allows for these more intimate learning environments and experiences.
- The public school system has been grossly affected by the political climate of our country. This is seen in numerous places across the United States and North Dakota is not immune to political correctness being injected into the school system, despite the personal beliefs of the family. There are more sensitive topics that should remain in the home and I as a parent should not have to worry about what my child is being exposed to by school staff and what they are being told to keep from parents. By sending my child to a private school that I got to personally select, I have more control over what staff will be exposing my children to. Not everyone can afford this luxury, but HB1532 would allow for more parents to take that control back.
- I personally believe there is value to have faith integrated into education, private schooling has allowed me to provide that opportunity to my children. There are many individuals who desire the same but cannot financially achieve that. HB1532 would allow for more families to make that choice.

HB1532 puts the power back to the parents to decide what is best for their family and their children. Each private school already has to meet the same educational standard imposed on our public school systems, so this choice *should* go back to the parents and financial strain should not be the sole reason parents have to choose otherwise.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I hope that you will chose to vote in favor of HB1532.

Sincerely,

Emily Bakken

Bismarck, ND