

February 1, 2023

Chairman Heinert and members of the committee, I ask you to strongly consider HB 1532. There are many important reasons to consider this bill, however, two that directly affect our family that I would like to highlight.

Not all children are created equally. They don't all fit into the same "box" of education or learning styles. Many thrive in smaller, more focused environments. Several years ago, Christ the King school in Mandan transitioned to the Montessori model of learning and it proved to be just what many families were looking for. It was the answer to many children's constant struggles. As a parent, it is heartbreaking to watch your child struggle with learning and for many it isn't that they are "below the charts" enough to need Special Education, just that they need a little extra attention or maybe even a more spiritual environment to thrive. For kids such as this, Private school is often the answer.

This leads to my second point. Private school parents are not all wealthy! For some of us, private schools were a decision that was made as a resort to help our child learn, grow spiritually and not struggle in a box that they did not fit in. It was not a decision that was made lightly because we knew as parents that it would significantly affect us financially. However, most parents would give up everything if they thought it would help their child to succeed. I heard many examples this week while discussing this with other parents. Families that knew that they would not be taking vacations while their children attended private school. Parents that took on second or third jobs to help cover costs because they knew it was helping their child, and so many other examples of hardships that were chosen to give their children the opportunity to succeed.

HB 1532 would give many parents another option to help their struggling child. By unloading some of the financial burden, many families may find the answer they are looking for in private education and the families that are already enrolled but are agonizing over each payment may find that with just a small amount of reimbursement from State funding, they have flexibility to spend more precious time supporting their children. Please consider House Bill 1532. Thank you for your time,

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