

March 24, 2023

Good day and thank you for your work in the legislature of our state.

I am Fr Kurtis Gunwall and I live in District 9B. I recently moved to Langdon and am now pastor at St Alphonsus Parish and School (with children from pre-school through 8th grade).

Since I moved to town last summer, I have spoken with members of the Langdon area about the reasons they do or do not send their kids to St Alphonsus School. These discussions included members of our parish that send to the public school and those at St Alphonsus School. The conversations also included families who do not attend our church but send their children to St Alphonsus School. I believe that the majority of our students are from families who do not attend our church. So one reason I support 1532 is because it allows any member of our community to take advantage of the benefits of smaller class sizes and more individual attention as well as the strong internal support that exists among the registered families. There are numerous other reasons including the ability to include and express faith which is an important part of a whole and healthy life, and relatedly, the freedom to pray with students during difficult times to bring them comfort and hope. Even students from “None” or “other” faith traditions attend our school.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 1532.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this bill for the good of dozens of communities throughout the state of North Dakota.

AMDG,

Fr. Kurtis Gunwall