



1 Testimony in support

2 HB 1491 – School Lunch Grant

3 Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education committee. We come to you with
4 support of this bill.

5 Unpaid lunch debt is a very real issue in schools – this is a hard reality as we come out of
6 COVID with families who have become accustomed to or who have never had to before
7 pay for school lunch. HB 1491 provides a grant to schools to pay for school meals to
8 students that meet the criteria outlined in this bill.

9 HB 1491 would appropriate \$6 million to the state superintendent for the purpose of
10 providing grants to school districts to defray the expenses of providing free meals for
11 students whose families are at or below a 200% federal poverty level. Twenty-eight
12 percent of North Dakota students fall at or below the 200% federal poverty level.

13 We know how incredibly important it is for kids to have a nutritious meal to learn well.
14 We want them to have food to do so. We must be able to be fiscally responsible about how
15 we approach this issue. Thank you for the time to testify on this bill.