

Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Jennifer Kallenbach and I am a resident of District 14. I have dedicated my career to working as a public school teacher in rural North Dakota for the last 14 years. Additionally, I have chosen to send both of my children to public school.

I am writing to you in regards to HB 1532. I would sincerely urge you to vote NO on this bill. Although I believe parents have a right to choose to send their children to private schools, as a North Dakota taxpayer I do not believe that up to \$24 million dollars of public funds should be used to support private schools.

I am particularly concerned with the lack of oversight in how this money can be spent. At this time, the bill does not require that the money be spent on academics. The money could be used by private schools for a variety of purposes that are not academically focused. Furthermore, public schools are required to follow open public meeting laws, have audits that can be viewed by taxpayers, and share evidence of how students perform on state and federal exams. Private schools are not required to be transparent about any of the information listed above.

Another concern I have is that money would be given to private schools without requiring them to accept all students. For example, public schools are required to accept all students in their district. This includes all students with learning disabilities, behavior challenges, and physical disabilities. As a teacher in a class B school, I truly believe that the variety of students we educate makes our school community stronger. Nevertheless, educating students on IEPs or students with other disabilities adds extra costs for school districts. Private schools do not have to accept these students. If this extra funding is to be given to private schools, they should be required to follow the same requirements as public schools. At this time HB 1532 does not require this.

I am incredibly proud to be a teacher in North Dakota and believe our public schools provide exceptional education to the students who enter our classrooms. I thank you for your service to North Dakota. I ask you to continue to support rural schools and the services they provide to all students by voting no on HB 1532.

Thank you,

Jennifer Kallenbach

Steele, ND