

RE: HB 1532

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

As a longtime resident of North Dakota, I am concerned about the impact that HB 1532 will have on our public school system. I moved to North Dakota from Utah, where the public schools are crowded, class sizes are large, and while overall funding is high, per capita funding is low. I've stayed in North Dakota for the K-12 system that my four children have thrived in.

HB 1532 takes resources away from the public K-12 system and puts those resources into private schools that do not have the same requirements for equitable access and enrollment, accountability standards, or local governance.

HB 1532 fails to recognize the landscape of North Dakota and the lack of private educational options in rural areas. Rural communities and families in our state will receive absolutely no benefit from this bill as there are no private or parochial nonpublic schools located in the majority of counties. This bill takes resources from the state's 490 public schools support private choices including those that may not be accredited, lead to a high school diploma, or have equitable enrollment policies and standards.

I've also heard, in discussion with local school board members and teachers, that the bill presents a "double whammy" in the funding formula... public schools will lose dollars both in terms of the voucher but also in per pupil funding.

Indeed, the House Appropriations Committee recommended a DO NOT PASS.

I strongly urge you to vote "no" on HB 1532.

Thank you for your consideration,

Daphne Pedersen

Grand Forks, ND