

March 13, 2023

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am against using public funds for private schools in whatever form they present themselves be it direct payment, a voucher, a tax credit, or any other method. (HB 1532)

Our State Constitution in Article VIII Section 2 states

"The legislative assembly shall provide for a uniform system of free public schools throughout the state, beginning with the primary and extending through all grades up to and including schools of higher education, except that the legislative assembly may authorize tuition, fees and service charges to assist in the financing of public schools of higher education."

If we fund private schools, we are not following our constitution.

If we did amend the constitution to give our state the ability to fund private schools, would this bill also provide oversight of those schools and make it required that private schools follow the same laws and teach the same standards?

Instead of funding private schools, I would suggest better funding public education so we can pay our teachers competitively and have adequate materials and facilities to enhance education for all.

I believe parents that want to educate their children in a different manner should have that right, but that choice means they need to provide that education without public tax dollars.

Sincerely,

Matthew A Nielson