

Senators,

I am writing in opposition to HB 1532. As I understand, the passing of this bill will take money from the public schools to reimburse 30% of the tuition costs for a student to attend a private school. Reading Section 3, the state will allocate \$24,000,000 to be used for reimbursement costs. I do not want \$24,000,000 of tax payers money (my money) to fund private schools. If we have \$24,000,000 to spend on education, lets further enhance an already productive and quality public educational system.

Could you answer this question, is our public education system broken?

If North Dakota has a broken education system, I might understand the need for such a program. However, North Dakota's educational system is not broken. Our ACT test scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment rates are among the best in the nation.

Diverting money for public schools to fund private school tuition fees will surely hinder our public schools' performances. This is based on the logic of maintaining our quality system with less money. This bill will create a broken educational system in North Dakota. Also, bear in mind that with a 30% tuition waiver, a private education will still be unobtainable to many residents of our state. That segment of our population will suffer the long term consequences of HB 1532.

A second repercussion of HB 1532 will be the opening of more private and charter schools in our state, thus diverting more money away from public schools in years ahead, further eroding our public educational system. We already have teacher shortage. Enticing the opening of more schools is not the solution to a labor shortage in education.

Lastly, the writing of HB 1532 places the burden of application, review, oversight, and audit of this program in the hands of the Department of Public Instruction. Is there a budget proposal for the additional staffing funds necessary to take on the extra bureaucratic tasks?

Please, for the sake of our quality public schools, VOTE NO on HB 1532. HB 1532 will be detrimental to the Department of Public Instruction and the quality of education in the great state of North Dakota.

Respectfully,

Larry Lasch

Wahpeton, ND