

Testimony on HB 1532

March 13, 2023

Chairman Elkin and Members of the House Education Committee, my name is Ken Miller, and I am fortunate to be the superintendent at the Hazen Public School District. If this bill passes, it will negatively impact my school district and other small North Dakota school districts. I write in **opposition of HB 1532** for the following reasons:

North Dakota has great private schools and residents in larger communities are fortunate to be able to choose to attend these schools. Some would say an advantage of private schools is they can say no to families, students, and the state. If private schools take public money, they should therefore lose the ability to say no. For example, this bill is not written to benefit our emotionally disturbed students, our students with intellectual disabilities, and other high need special education students because private schools will choose not to educate them for various reasons. Also, our rural students will not be able to access this voucher because they do not have a drive-able private school option. Hazen is 60 plus miles away from the closest private school. Most individuals that are in support of this bill are not from rural North Dakota but instead who live in our 4 largest cities. The patrons in our small school districts do not want to help fund private schools for about 7% of North Dakota students living in Bismarck, Fargo, Minot, and Dickinson.

I strongly urge the Committee to give a DO NOT PASS to HB 1532.

If any member of the Committee wishes to contact me for additional comments or questions, I would be happy to respond.

I respectfully submit this testimony and thank the Committee for its attention.