

March 13, 2023

Written Testimony in Support of HB 1532

Dear Members of the North Dakota Senate Education Committee,

We are writing to express our strong support for House Bill 1532, which seeks to establish an educational reimbursement program for North Dakota parents who decide to send their children to a non-public school.

Having a choice in the schools their young children attend is crucial for parents as it allows them to make decisions that best fit their family's needs and values. The passing of House Bill 1532 can significantly impact the financial burden that parents face when choosing between public and private schools for their children. It could promote school choice and allow parents to select educational options most suitable for their child's needs. Indeed, the bill's provisions could ease the financial constraints on families and enable them to access a broader range of educational opportunities.

In our communities, like our own family, several parents may have certain religious beliefs or unique educational objectives they wish to prioritize. The option of selecting schools can assist them in finding the most suitable match for their children, as per their preferences.

The claim made by critics that House Bill 1532 weakens the effectiveness of the public school system, and reduces its funding, is entirely untrue. These faulty perceptions have been largely influenced by the arguments of its opponents and lobbyists of the public school system. In reality, House Bill 1532 acknowledges the crucial role played by both public and private schools in our State and does not deprive any resources of the former. Moreover, it is entirely possible that House Bill 1532 will enhance the efficiency of the public school system. For example, the increased flexibility provided to parents by House Bill 1532 promotes healthy competition among schools, leading to improved educational opportunities and outcomes for all students in our local communities and throughout our entire State.

In order to guarantee that parents can make the best educational decisions for their children, it is crucial to offer them more flexibility in determining their children's educational path. Therefore, this bill is not only a matter of parental rights but also of ensuring that every child receives the highest quality of education possible. By supporting this bill, you are taking a crucial step towards empowering parents to make informed decisions regarding their children's education.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Shane & Dana Zaback

