

My name is Melissa Buchhop and I am a proud public school educator. I am testifying in opposition to HB 1532. The public schools are an important FREE education for ALL students.

Private schools that will benefit from HB 1532 are not required to follow many federal and state requirements. In fact, the bill specifically prohibits requiring private schools to alter their admissions policy. They are free to deny admission to any student for any reason, including cognitive ability, physical disability, as well as behavioral and social limitations. Public schools, on the other hand, proudly educate ALL students, regardless of their limitations and abilities. If private schools are to receive state funding, then they should have to follow the same state and federal requirements as North Dakota's public schools.

Instead of funding the private schools, why doesn't the state look at providing more funding to special education services and mental health services for our students. The students that private schools would likely deny admission.

Taxpayer money should not be funding private education. Keep the public funds in the public schools.