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ND Legislature
69th Assembly

RE: HB 1590

While this bill has some attractive and reasonable tenets relating to education accounts, I am writing today in opposition of this HB 1590.

First, I appreciate that the bill actually provides a legitimate savings account where state money is only “unlocked” after a parent makes a contribution to the account. This is a true savings account similar to HSAs. Second, I commend the inclusion of all students: public, private and home educated. This is fair as even public school parents incur costs of education not covered by tax dollars. Third, I recognize the ability to transfer unused funds into a college save account as valuable and thoughtful.

Thank you very much for those thoughtful considerations in writing this bill. I truly appreciate them.

However, public funding of private education is a slippery slope that I and most other homeschoolers do not want to slide down. We have fought long and hard for the freedoms we have to educate our children without state oversight and without state interference.

I am the president of Tricity Home Educators Association serving 150 families which equates to about 475 students. We are not the only support group in the Bismarck area and not every homeschooling family is a member. The majority of homeschoolers with whom I have contact do not want state money because they've seen the regulations that quickly follow.

The bill does not include qualifications and regulations for eligibility or compliance. It also does not set forth any protections for homeschoolers nor private schools. This opens both to government over-reach, unintended consequences of program administration, and kind of feels like bait in a trap. Since there is no protection from regulation, nor no clear expectation of qualification, we don't really know what we are signing up for and are left open to strings we did not want.

For these reasons, I encourage a “do not pass” on this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kristy Rose