

Esteemed members of the 69th Legislative Assembly,

My name is Montana Ackman, I live within District 23 in Williston, North Dakota and I am writing to you today to strongly urge you to vote "No" on HB 1540.

Our local schools within our District 7 need the funding that has been dedicated to them to serve the children within our community. Our town has more than doubled in population within the last ten to fifteen years and our school system has consistently struggled with meeting the needs of our ever growing population within the constraints of our budget. In the over ten years that I have lived in Williston, we have constantly needed to be expanding our existing schools and building new and bigger schools as quickly and as often as we are able to do so.

Williston has voted in favor of increasing our property taxes to this end no less than twice in five years.

Parents in our town have no real feasible options besides public schools because we do not have other schools. HB 1540 provides no real tangible benefits to our area and instead takes the money that we have paid in taxes and gives it away to schools and parents who already have so many more options available to them than our schools and our parents as this supposed benefit will almost exclusively be able to be taken advantage of only by students and parents who live in our more urban areas (Bismark, Mandan, Fargo, Grand Forks, etc.) at the detriment to the funding of literally every other town and school district within our state.

I urge you to think realistically as you think of the education of our children. Our children are our future, but without proper funding to ALL schools within North Dakota, what future are we creating for our children?

Bearing all of this in mind, I am strongly urging you to think of the small and rural schools within North Dakota and vote "NO" on HB 1540 as this bill that would funnel money away from the students and teachers who make up the majority of our great state.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state.

Respectfully,

Montana Ackman