

Chair Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Kala Christensen, and I teach English in 7th grade in Grand Forks. I am asking for a DO NOT PASS vote on HB 1540. Education savings accounts funded with public funds have no place in our state. Public funds should NOT go to private schools. Taxpayer money is for public entities.

As a child-free homeowner and North Dakota taxpayer, I understand the frustration some feel when their tax dollars go to agencies or organizations that they do not think are useful in their life. I do not have children in public school, using the public parks or skating arenas, or attending story time at our public library. However, I am not here lobbying for my tax dollars back for not using these public entities. Nor should we give parents who choose not to have their children participate in public school or other entities their money back. It is their choice to attend private school, just as it is my choice not to have children and, therefore, not use these public entities.

While some say that I don't have skin in this game as a child-free person, I understand the importance of my tax dollars funding public schools. The need for an educated society is crucial, and I want my tax dollars to go to the organizations that educate 90%+ of our children. I want my future leaders, doctors, accountants, etc., to be the best they can be. That happens with fully-funded, high-quality public education. Public education is the only place EVERY child can learn and grow to their highest potential.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Kala Christensen