

1 North Dakota School Study Council Testimony in Opposition to SB 2180 –  
2 Public Comment

3 Chair Roers and Members of the Committee,

4 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2180. The  
5 schools I represent are opposed to this bill in its current form. Most schools  
6 have a policy on public comment.

7 School Boards are required to prepare and post an agenda, so the public  
8 knows what is being discussed. Often times, people try to engage school  
9 board members in a conversation during public comment. Discussing  
10 items not on the agenda is frowned upon and can be a violation of the open  
11 meeting laws.

12 Public comment at school board meetings should be limited to items on the  
13 agenda. When the public testifies in legislative committees, they need to  
14 stick to the topic. It is not a free, open mic. In fact, there are times when  
15 neutral testimony is not accepted. There needs to be a time limit and  
16 restrictions on repeating what's already been stated.

17 To limit lawsuits for libel and slander, comments about individuals (coaches,  
18 teachers, etc...) should be prohibited. If there truly are issues with  
19 personnel (teachers and/or administrators) which would move to non-  
20 renewal, the school board is the judge and jury and they should not be  
21 prejudiced by hearing accusations about individuals prior to the non-  
22 renewal hearing.

23 We ask for a “Do Not Pass” on SB 2180. Thank you for your consideration!

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25 Dr. Paul Stremick