



Great Public Schools

Great Public Service

**Testimony Before the Senate Workforce Development Committee
HB 1498
Thursday, March 20, 2025**

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Committee, for the record my name is Nick Archuleta, and I am the president of North Dakota United. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to offer testimony in support of HB 1498, and to urge a *do pass* recommendation.

All of us at ND United are in favor of putting more money in the pockets of teachers. With that said, I want to note that sign-on bonuses and other short-term fixes are not our preferred means of doing so. We believe that every effort should be made to dedicate more resources to teacher salaries and benefits so that these short-term fixes become unnecessary. At ND United, we would prefer to see all matters related to salaries and the terms and conditions of teacher employment enshrined in each school district's negotiated agreement after those issues have been bargained in good faith at the negotiations table.

Furthermore, we have concerns about the equitable distribution of bonuses across different schools and districts. What we want to avoid are bidding wars between districts and schools trying to attract educators. Taken too far, bonuses run the very real risk of undermining the morale of those teachers who have worked in our schools for years and will not receive a bonus for staying.

Having said all that, I think that a friendly amendment should be considered which would limit sign-on bonuses to those filling hard to fill positions for

reasons of a shortage of teachers in a given academic area or for geographic hardship. These parameters, I believe, would make sense in this case and be easier for those not getting bonuses to accept.

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Committee, with that I will close my testimony, urge you to consider the amendment, and give a ***do-pass*** recommendation to HB 1498.

