

January 31, 2023

Chairperson Heinert and Committee Members,

I strongly urge a Do NOT Pass on HB 1532. School voucher bills like this one are used to privatize education and send taxpayers' dollars to non-public schools. I am proud that I attended excellent public schools in my home state of Montana growing up, and I believe that one of the most important investments governments and communities can make is in education that is accessible to all and inclusive for all. While parent choice is important, taxpayer dollars should not be used for private schools - they should be used to support education that is available to all students. Unlike public schools, private schools are not required to admit all students, particularly students with special needs. Private schools are not required to be transparent with where these public dollars would be spent. Rural North Dakotans have no proximity to private schools and will only see a reduction in resources across the public education system. In other states, voucher programs have led to consolidation of rural schools. Rural schools are a hub of activity and employment and losing rural schools is a loss for our state. Please keep our public dollars in public schools. I urge a Do NOT Pass on HB 1532.

Sincerely,  
Rev. Sylvia Bull  
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