

March 27, 2023

Honorable members of the North Dakota State Senate,

My name is Perry Olson, and my wife Melissa and I write today to strongly encourage your support of HB1532 which has already passed the House and has gotten a thumbs up from the Senate Education Committee earlier this month. This bill, as you know, would move ND in the direction of school choice – a conservative idea that has been sweeping the country (**Gov. DeSantis just TODAY signed sweeping legislation in Florida into law. That follows states like Missouri, Arizona, Kansas, Oklahoma, Utah, Texas, Virginia, Idaho, and Nebraska making moves toward school choice**). Our children attend school at Bishop Ryan Catholic School in Minot, and we are firm believers in private school options for all parents and children in our state. This bill will help make that possible for more North Dakota families.

While we want to be clear – our state’s public institutions do a fine job – the option still should be on the table for all North Dakotans to investigate private options. As taxpayers, we currently support the public schools but do not use them. This plan would shift some of those dollars into **following the child, not the school**. We see this as wise, forward-looking, and of great benefit to our state’s next generation.

Our children’s education at Bishop Ryan has been top notch and is provided at great cost to our family. We however feel it is a great investment in their futures – and worth every penny. It is so wonderful that this fully constitutional option exists. Other states have jumped on it – and ND needs to do the same. This is a good bill that does not take funds from the state’s public schools and limits to 30% reimbursement of the state’s per-pupil rate. It is a modest option, and one that deserves your support.

We look forward to seeing the Senate pass this bill, and Governor Burgum sign it into law!

Thank you for your service to our great State of North Dakota. We know the time commitment made, and regardless of your stance on this bill – THANK YOU for what you do.

Perry and Melissa Olson
Minot, ND