

HB 1532 – In Favor

As a parent and resident of North Dakota, I am writing to express my support for HB 1532. This bill provides educational reimbursement for each student attending a non-public school in grades K-12, which will benefit many families in our state.

First and foremost, this program will not take any funds or resources away from students attending public schools. In fact, it is entirely separate from public school K-12 foundation aid payments and is funded by a new appropriation. This ensures that public schools will not be negatively impacted by this program. It has been misstated that HB 1532 is unconstitutional, when that is not the case. States and legislators serving their constituents are not violating the U.S. Constitution by acting affirmatively on HB 1532.

HB 1532 is fiscally prudent and smart with respect to its return on investment. The cost of this program is capped by the appropriation granted through the legislature, currently set at \$24 million for the biennium. Additionally, the reimbursement amount per student is no more than 30% of the state's base per-pupil rate. This is a very fiscally sustainable bill, showing good stewardship of the state's resources.

Additionally, a strong school ecosystem, comprised of a diverse array of schools, is important to attracting new residents to our state, retaining existing residents, and supporting a multitude of workforce needs. By providing families with the opportunity to choose from a variety of schools, we can ensure a vibrant and innovative educational landscape in North Dakota.

Personally, our family moved from Minnesota to North Dakota because of the strong private school options through the JP II Schools in Fargo, North Dakota. We have been very grateful for the quality of the education our daughter is receiving, and we are confident that the families of North Dakota will be well served if HB 1532 passes. Our child's school does an outstanding job of involving parents in the complex process of fostering a positive school environment, and I have been impressed with their commitment to transparency in decision making and reporting on school outcomes.

The school environment that we chose is one that cultivates empathy and compassion for others, fosters ethical development and decision making, motivates and empowers individuals and communities, builds academic achievement and success, educates the whole person, and provides rigorous opportunities for learning, reflection, and growth. While I can see the tremendous impact of this environment for our family, I also see how it positively impacts the community and state. HB 1532 is a win-win for families, students, and North Dakota!

In conclusion, I urge you to support HB 1532. This program will provide important educational opportunities for families in our state without having any negative impact on public schools. Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the great state of North Dakota.

Sincerely,

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