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3-2-16

Dear Representative KleeB and Committee Members,

I would like to provide written testimony on HB 2590, which is being sponsored by Representative Joe Seiwert. This bill doesn't resolve the concerns that I have with the overall issues of school funding. However, it does provide some potential new revenue sources in a time when schools are struggling.

This bill allows patrons who are interested in donating money to their school district the opportunity to check a box on their income tax return, which would send their return to the district. While I don't see this as either a potential financial windfall, or a stable source of revenue that schools can use in the budgeting process, it could provide additional dollars for special projects.

Most school districts now have 501C3 organizations that currently support these types of special projects. In my district it is the Renwick Education Foundation. This organization raises funds through community events and private donations. We use these funds to finance special projects such as our EZ School Messenger System, Student Scholarships, and Teacher Grants. This is no different than what HB 2590 is proposing, which is an opportunity for patrons to donate to their local school district.

I hope you will consider HB 2590 for a favorable vote, and allow it to be debated on the house floor. Again, it is an out of the box idea that could provide some relief to school districts financial situations. It isn't the stable funding that we all desire, but it is an attempt to allow patrons an avenue to support public schools.

Respectfully,

Tracy Bourne
Renwick USD 267 Superintendent