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**Testimony on SB 2229  
Senate Education Committee  
February 2, 2021**

Chairman Schaible and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record, I am Nick Archuleta, and I am president of North Dakota United. I am here today to support SB 2229 and to urge a DO PASS recommendation.

Mr. Chairman and Committee members, about five years ago, Dr. Larry Skogen, then president at Bismarck State College, wrote a white paper that looked at what had been called a teacher shortage in North Dakota. What Dr. Skogen discovered and shared in that white paper was that ND did not have a teacher shortage. North Dakota's colleges of education were graduating enough students to fill every open position in the state. The issue was that many graduates were not willing to go to North Dakota's more rural school districts. For various reasons including lifestyle choices, many preferred to substitute teach in our larger communities or even to delay entry to the profession until something opened in our larger cities.

Mr. Chairman, SB 2229 is legislation intended to encourage aspiring educators to consider North Dakota's rural communities as venues to student teach as a part of their learning experience. Should SB 2229 pass, it would help attract student teachers to schools that need them and provide student teachers with expert supervision, mentorship, and training. Furthermore, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, an additional benefit is that the student teaching experience in rural North Dakota might just appeal to the aspiring educators who avail themselves of this option. If that is the case, many may be willing to stay or teach in another small town.

With that, I will conclude my testimony and urge a DO Pass Recommendation for SB 2229.