

HOUSE BILL NO. 1068

Introduced by

Representative R. Kelsch

(At the request of the State Board for Vocational and Technical Education)

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 15-20.4 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the issuance, manufacture, and use of false academic credentials;
3 and to provide a penalty.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 15-20.4 of the North Dakota Century Code is
6 created and enacted as follows:

7 **Unlawful to issue, manufacture, or use false academic credentials - Penalty.**

- 8 1. It is unlawful for a person or entity to knowingly issue or manufacture a false
9 academic credential.
- 10 2. It is unlawful for a person to knowingly use or claim to have a false academic
11 credential:
- 12 a. To obtain employment;
- 13 b. To obtain a promotion or higher compensation in employment;
- 14 c. To obtain admission to an institution of higher learning; or
- 15 d. In connection with any business, trade, profession, or occupation.
- 16 3. In this section:
- 17 a. "False academic credential" means:
- 18 (1) A degree, certificate, diploma, transcript, or other document purporting
19 to be issued by an institution of higher learning or purporting to indicate
20 that a person has completed an organized academic program of study
21 or completed courses at an institution of higher learning when the
22 person has not completed the organized academic program of study or
23 the courses as indicated on the degree, certificate, diploma, transcript,
24 or document; or

- 1 (2) A degree, certificate, diploma, transcript, or other document issued by
- 2 an entity that is not an institution of higher learning.
- 3 b. "Institution of higher learning" means an institution that:
- 4 (1) Has accreditation recognized by the United States secretary of
- 5 education or has the foreign equivalent of such accreditation;
- 6 (2) Has an authorization to operate under this chapter;
- 7 (3) Operates in this state and is exempt from this chapter under section
- 8 15-20.4-02;
- 9 (4) Does not operate in this state and is:
- 10 (a) Licensed by the appropriate state agency; and
- 11 (b) An active applicant for accreditation by an accrediting body
- 12 recognized by the United States secretary of education; or
- 13 (5) Has been found by the state board for vocational and technical
- 14 education to meet standards of academic quality comparable to those
- 15 of an institution located in the United States that has accreditation
- 16 recognized by the United States secretary of education to offer degrees
- 17 of the type and level claimed.
- 18 4. A person or entity who violates this section is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.