

ND HOUSE INDUSTRY BUSINESS AND LABOR COMMITTEE

Chairman Mike Lefor

Testimony in support of HCR 3039, 67th Legislative Session

Good afternoon Chairman Lefor and members of the House Industry Business and Labor Committee. For the record, I am Representative Kathy Skroch, District 26, Lidgerwood, ND.

Thank you Chairman Lefor and committee members for allowing me to appear before your committee today in consideration of a study on student internships in the state of North Dakota.

(Story) Student had to give up a day job and only source of income to complete internship hours which caused severe financial hardship. The question raised was why do some interns receive compensation for their work while others are not? This journey began by introducing a bill to address this issue. That bill became this study resolution.

It seemed a simple solution to simply pass a law that required interns be paid at least minimum wage. The more I researched, the more complex I discovered this issue to be. Further research indicated that some interns are paid very well while others receive no monetary compensation. I have provided some of the materials provided from that search in handouts.

TOO MANY QUESTIONS

1. Which occupations would be affected? Don't know.
2. Of those compensated financially, what pay do they receive? Don't know.
3. How would those providers who offer internship hours be affected? Don't know.
4. If compensation was required, would there be a loss of providers in the state?
5. How many providers do we have in the state? Don't know.
6. Do student interns receive benefits that are equal to a form of compensation equal to a wage?
7. Do providers receive a benefit from internship hours provided to them by interns? How would this be measured?
8. What businesses, for profit and non-profit, government agencies and college programs provide these opportunities to student interns? Not sure.
9. How are students connected to providers and what would the impact be if a student was unable to find a provider to meet internship hours needed?
10. How are students in ND able to complete internship hours when the study courses are on-line college courses from an out of state source?
11. How are accrediting boards and licensing boards involved in the process including number of hours requirements?
12. Could an adjusted wage be offered taking into consideration of benefits to both student and provider such as a percentile of minimum wage?
13. What will the impact be upon internship programs if Congress approves a raise of minimum wage to \$15 per hour?
14. What programs are currently available in ND to incentivize career studies is labor shortage areas? Do these include grants that cover tuition and internship costs?
15. What apprenticeship opportunities for training programs are available in ND, for which occupations? What are apprentices paid?

16. How are colleges, the Department of Labor, and High school education programs involved?
17. Would state paid internships be an incentive to bring more students to ND college studies?

In conclusion, it was clear that a study is necessary to take a deeper look into all the aspects of student internships in the state of ND.

HCR 3039 was introduced to call for that study. I ask the committee to give this resolution a Do Pass recommendation.

Questions?

Representative Kathy Skroch