

Chairman Holmberg and members of the committee,

My name is Jerome Richter and I am the Executive Vice President at the University of Mary. I am here today on behalf of the University of Mary's nearly 3,800 students, which just over half are out of state students, and its 540 employees, to ask for your support of HB 1137.

As many of you know, the University of Mary was founded in 1959 by the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery. These sisters first arrived in Bismarck in 1878 and immediately started meeting the critical needs of the community by starting a school, St. Mary's Academy, and a hospital, St. Alexius Hospital. Our heritage is one of addressing the needs of those around us, and from the very beginning we have relied on the generosity of others to make this happen.

While much has changed in our state since then, our mission remains the same, and the support of our donor base to allow us to continue this good work has never been more important. I have spent much of my career in higher education fundraising, and I have seen firsthand how valuable a tax credit is to securing donors in a sustainable and mutually beneficial way. Tax credits have allowed me to approach potential donors that would not have entertained the idea of philanthropy without the "nudge" that a tax credit provides. Without the support of our donors, we would not be able to fulfill our mission; forming leaders in the service of Truth.

Currently the University of Mary offers 54 majors, 15 master's degrees, and 4 doctorates. UMary has satellite campuses in Fargo, Watford City, and downtown Bismarck, and between the direct spending of the university, its employees, and its students, the University of Mary generated \$209,649,439 for the regional economy in 2019. It is clear that a tax incentive to our donors will increase our ability to financially help our students, pay our employees, and grow our university. All these things will only increase our economic impact on the regional economy, which will be a multiplying benefit to the entire state of North Dakota.

Thank you and God bless,

Jerome J. Richter
Exec. Vice President
University of Mary