



Letter of Support – SB 2003

Wednesday, March 12th, 2025

Chairman Nathe and members of the House Appropriations Committee – Education and Environment Division,

For the record, my name is Cale Dunwoody, and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 2003, specifically Workforce Education Innovation program.

At the FMWF Chamber, our mission is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. Our members continue to express concerns centered around the availability of high-quality, skilled workers. While the shortage gap across the United States is narrowing, North Dakota remains one of the most severe states when it comes to workforce challenges. The U.S. Chamber estimates that there are approximately only 30 available workers for every 100 open jobs in North Dakota, compared with the national rate of 83 available workers for every 100 open jobs. This indicates more must be done to attract, retain, develop and match employees with in-demand jobs. Higher education plays a crucial role in addressing these shortages and ensuring student outcomes.

Critical investments into North Dakota's Workforce Education Innovation program will provide our institutions of higher education, like North Dakota State College of Science, with the additional support they need to create or enhance educational programming to fortify a robust workforce pipeline across the state. These funds will further align programs and career pathways with current industry demands, and ensure students are best prepared for our ever-evolving workforce environment.

This financial support strategically invests in innovative solutions to address North Dakota's workforce shortages that are hindering economic growth and business vitality. To meet the growing workforce demands of the state, we encourage additional support in creative solutions, like this, that build industry-aligned educational opportunities across North Dakota. We urge the committee to give this bill a DO PASS recommendation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to North Dakota's business environment.

Sincerely,

Cale Dunwoody
Vice President of Public Policy
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce