



DAKOTA COLLEGE AT BOTTINEAU

HB 1161

House Education Committee

February 17, 2025

Carmen M. Simone, Campus Dean and Chief Executive Officer

carmen.simone@dakotacollege.edu

Chair Heinert and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Carmen Simone, Campus Dean for Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB). On behalf of our institution, I am providing this written testimony in opposition of HB 1161.

The flexibility currently afforded to our higher education institutions allows us to continuously adjust operations to yield maximum responsiveness and efficiency. DCB has benefitted from this flexibility over the past several years. Two specific examples are given below.

The Minot Airforce Base (MAFB) traditionally allows only five higher education institutions to have physical access to their facilities and servicemen. In spring 2024, MAFB experienced turnover with the departure of Park University. Because we are considered local and due to our affiliate relationship with Minot State University, DCB was offered an opportunity to have a presence at MAFB. This arrangement came with the stipulation that DCB provide an onsite coordinator to work closely with individuals seeking higher education. Because we already had a few vacant positions, we were able to quickly redeploy one of them to be utilized to build this unanticipated, but absolutely invaluable relationship.

Due to her unique background, a part-time sociology instructor expanded her role by agreeing to cover new courses in human resources at DCB. Her resulting student evaluations were stellar. Because of her value to the institution, she was offered a full-time position. She accepted, and we continue to reap the benefits of her excellent instruction today. Without the current flexibility given to administration, we would not have been able to react to these positive outcomes, and the services of an outstanding educator may have been lost.

These two recent examples at DCB help illustrate the value of rapid reorganization in response to community-driven factors. The ability to be responsive is crucial to higher education and we appreciate the trust placed in our organizations. In the end, our students and our communities benefit from our nimble decision-making.

We respectfully ask the committee to give a DO NOT PASS recommendation on this bill. Thank you for your consideration.