



Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead

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March 5, 2021

Appropriations Committee
North Dakota House of Representatives
State Capitol Building
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

The Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead represents approximately 750 builders and related businesses throughout Cass County. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter urging you to catalyze economic development and financial stability by supporting Senate Bill 2019 and the funding it proposes for career and technical education.

The North Dakota workforce currently lacks the skills and knowledge required to build, update, and maintain homes. As a result, construction costs and purchase prices are pushed to levels that exclude potential homebuyers from the market and communities lose economic activity and revenue potential. The current shortage has brought the growth cycle to a standstill in North Dakota.

These economic losses will continue until we, as a state, acknowledge the fact that a 4-year degree and labor alone do not build homes, whereas Senate Bill 2019 supports the academies that cultivate skills, education and housing diversity that the North Dakota ecosystem desperately needs.

Rather than considering this testimony a plea, please accept it as an invitation for you to join us as economic investors in the state you represent. The private sector and other government entities are already collaborating to broaden the career and technical education resources.

For example, the Cass County Career Workforce Academy (CWA) is an educational facility planned through the collaborative work of the North Dakota State College of Science and multiple public and private entities in the region.

To date, 60 private businesses, Fueling Our Future, Cass County, the City of Fargo, the City of West Fargo, and the U.S. Dept. of Commerce have pledged a total of \$21 million to the CWA. Further, all K-4 schools in the area endorse the project.

This force was working before Senate Bill 2019 was introduced and today, its partners are compelled to ask, "Will the largest beneficiary of our efforts, the State of North Dakota, join us in correcting the workforce shortage?" Senate Bill 2019 is the state's opportunity and we urge you to support it.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Bryce Johnson
Chief Executive Officer

Kim Hochhalter
President

Affiliated With



HBA of F-M's vision is to nurture a thriving, innovative and diverse housing industry in our community.