



To: House Appropriations – Education and Environment Division  
From: Shannon Full, President/CEO, FMWF Chamber of Commerce  
Date: March 5, 2021  
RE: **Support SB 2019**

Chair Monson, members of the House Appropriations EE Division,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **supportive testimony regarding SB 2019** on behalf of our Chamber's over 2,000 member businesses.

Workforce issues remain one of the top concerns hindering the future success of many of our local businesses. Our community has stepped up to address these workforce needs through collaboratively developing solutions focused on local workforce and employer needs to alleviate long-term workforce shortages. One of these solutions is the creation of a Cass County Career Workforce Academy (CWA). The academy will provide all Cass County K-14 students, incumbent workforce and new immigrants a curriculum to prepare them for successful careers. It will supply opportunities for career awareness, exploration, pathways, development and training. This is in part accomplished through hands-on career training and program opportunities for those interested in a technical degree.

We continue to see high demand for workforce and with Amazon moving to the region, and the future diversion construction requiring increased workforce, our region could be in danger of disastrous workforce shortage issues creating wide spread impacts if we don't invest in workforce solutions while expanding and growing our region and the state. Because our business, education and community leaders believe so strongly in this asset, the project is almost a reality. The academy has the impressive collaboration of NDSCS and several K-12 school districts. Also, over 60 private businesses as well as Cass County, the City of Fargo, the City of West Fargo, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and The Chamber and EDC through Fueling Our Future, have contributed \$21 million of the \$30 million project.

We need to invest in workforce solutions on a statewide level and have a statewide approach to talent attraction, retention and development. I'm glad to see this bill includes funding for this purpose across the state. I respectfully ask for your strong support of Career Workforce Academy grants and overall CTE funding by **supporting SB 2019**.

Thank you,  
Shannon Full

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