

**Monday March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Testimony to the House Education Committee regarding SB 2140**

**Chair-Representative Mark Owens**

Good Morning Chairman Owens, Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck and members of the committee. I am Jason Schmidt from Kidder County. I am here today to testify **in favor of SB 2140** and returning the PSEP program to the way it has been run for the better part of the last 40 yrs. My daughter Paige is currently enrolled at Kansas State University in her 1<sup>st</sup> year of vet school. Therefore, she is part of the first class of ND students affected by the 11<sup>th</sup> hour changes to the program in the last legislative session.

As I visited with her about school and her future in veterinary medicine during the Christmas break, she expressed the concerns she had about the pressure to find a job in ND upon graduation in order to avoid the **extra \$112,000 expense** she would incur if she couldn't find something within 3 years! When I told her she was the first class in nearly 40 years to have this requirement, she was shocked to say the least.

As a parent I am not just concerned about the extra debt she may incur if she can't find a job here within 3 years but also and maybe more importantly, she could be forced to take a job in a field or practice that is not at all her specialty. The harsh reality about vet school is that these students need real world experience upon graduation to become a practicing veterinarian and you can't accomplish that if you aren't able to gain the practical skills in your area of expertise because you took any job you could find just to satisfy this requirement.

Now I have no doubt that Paige will return to ND and become a practicing veterinarian someday here because she loves her home state and her small town heritage. She is the epitome of ND nice and loves everything our wonderful state has to offer. However, as a parent, I just don't want her to follow a path that will lead her away from her strengths and passion in her career. After 7 or 8 years of school I would hope she could be rewarded by a job she enjoys and puts her heart and soul into and not one that makes her miserable and resentful to go to work each day because she accepted a position to fill the new requirements of this program.

Thank you for your time and I would again ask for your support on SB 2140.