

**Greater North Dakota Chamber  
SB 2272  
House Education Committee  
Representative Owens - Chair  
March 17, 2021**

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Matt Gardner and I am here today representing the Greater North Dakota Chamber. The Greater North Dakota Chamber is the largest statewide business advocacy organization in the state and we are the state affiliate for NAM (National Association of Manufacturers). We stand in support of SB 2272 and ask for a do pass.

The workforce challenges in the state are of great concern to our members and through our policy development process, workforce rose as likely our number one issue facing business. Although there is not a silver bullet to fix the workforce challenges in North Dakota, the bill before you, is a significant step in the right direction. Our employers are not only competing among each other for a qualified workforce but other states. The three states that border North Dakota (Montana, South Dakota and Minnesota) have similar programs that compete for North Dakota students and are essentially attracting our workforce to live and work in their states. North Dakota needs to continue this program so businesses can continue to attract and retain workforce to fill North Dakota jobs but more importantly invest in our own youth and retain them here to live and work in our great state.

This bill will:

- Help fill the skills gap by driving students to in demand, high paying career fields.
- Attract and retain or existing and future workforce.
- Improve access and affordability to education.

It is GNDC's opinion that this bill is a workforce bill. We are investing in our future as a state through building up our youth and those who would like to live and work in North Dakota. On behalf of GNDC I urge a do pass on SB 2272.