



Testimony of Jennifer Greuel
Economic Development Association of North Dakota
In Support of SB 2016
January 11, 2021

Chair Holmberg and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

EDND represents more than 80 state economic development organizations on the front line of economic development efforts throughout North Dakota. The primary purpose of the organization is to promote the creation of new wealth throughout North Dakota to develop more vibrant communities and improve quality of life. It is for these reasons our organization and its members want to express support for SB 2016, the Job Service North Dakota appropriation bill.

EDND recognizes the importance of connecting businesses and education through expanded career counseling, career and technical education, and post-secondary education and training programs that support the state's most critical occupational needs. Job Service North Dakota serves as the conduit between job seekers and employers, and EDND urges the funding for continuation of their programming.

Job Service provides many essential services for economic developers, including regional and company-specific job fairs, and is also a great resource for wage-related information for economic developers and businesses. We see the agency as the state's premier job source organization. Programs such as New Jobs Training provides worker education and training specifically required for jobs in new and expanding primary-sector businesses and encourages employers to create new high-wage jobs in our state.

Although North Dakota's unemployment rate has gone up slightly due to the pandemic (4.5 percent in Nov. 2020), the state's unemployment rate is still lower than 38 other states and workforce availability remains a significant challenge facing North Dakota businesses, limiting the growth potential of the economy. North Dakota especially needs job seekers to be connected with resources and education in order to be placed in a high demand career path. EDND supports the development of workforce attraction, development and training strategies that address the needs of the state's companies. The investments included in this bill will continue to help grow and diversify our state's economy.

Thank you for this opportunity to address your committee and express our support for SB 2016.