



## SB2272 | Senate Education Committee Hearing

January 27, 2021

John Richman, Ph.D. - President

Chair Schaible and Committee Members: my name is John Richman, and I serve as the President at the North Dakota State College of Science.

I'm here today in support of SB2272. [This bill creates the appropriation for Career Builders scholarship and loan repayment program.]

This program has enabled NDSCS to enhance our ability to address the critical workforce shortage we are experiencing through attracting and retaining more students to North Dakota, while further increasing the affordability of higher education through partnering with private business and industry. One of 36 NDSCS students that has benefitted from this program has submitted testimony in support – Trystin says is the best when he closes his testimony by saying: "...this is the BEST program!" which has been affirmed (or will be affirmed) by our partners, such as General Equipment.

One of the premier benefits of the Career Builders program is that is not structured like typical 'scholarship' programs – students are not chosen primarily on merit or income status – but rather are selected based on:

- chosen career path,
- willingness to stay in-state, and,
- in most cases, the connection they have established with a North Dakota employer.

Since 2019, the ND Career Builder program has helped fund **36 NDSCS students for a total of \$257,278**. This program has enhanced our Student Sponsorship matching program which matches students with employers. To date, that program has matched 87 students – however, with enhanced marketing and promotion we could grow this number. As of yesterday, we have 488 students willing to be matched – but only 55 employers in the database.

As I am sure you are aware, we have stiff workforce competition; more than 25 states and municipalities have adopted similar last-dollar/promise programs – including Minnesota, South Dakota and Montana. Historically, 70% of students that enroll at NDSCS graduate from a North Dakota high school; the majority of the other 30% comes from neighboring states (Minnesota, South Dakota, Montana).

The continued investment in the Career Builders program would be a true investment in our students and the future workforce of North Dakota.

We respectfully request a do pass on SB 2272 and I am available to answer your questions.

Thank you for your time.

**John Richman, Ph.D.**

*NDSCS President*

[John.Richman@ndscs.edu](mailto:John.Richman@ndscs.edu)

701.671.2221