Senate Finance and Tax
HB1380

March 17, 2021

Chair Bell and members of the committee, my name is Wayde Sick, State Director of the Department of Career and Technical Education. I am submitting testimony in support for HB1380 but ask that it is amended to reflect the original version of the bill.

In the original version, Section 3 of HB1380 created a career and technical education support fund for the Department of Career and Technical Education to support career and technical education centers and programs. Section 6, subsection 5h. in the original version, stated that 4% of the Legacy Fund earnings would be deposited in this fund.

Currently there are approximately 590 CTE programs across the state, taught through our high schools and ten Area Career and Technology Centers. These programs include Agriculture Education, Business Education, Career Development, Family and Consumer Science, Health Sciences, Information Technology, Marketing, Technology and Engineering and Trade and Industry. These programs are delivered in a variety of methods, including face-to-face, online and Interactive Television or ITV. Regardless of the delivery method, CTE instructors and administrators ensure coursework aligns with industry, through industry advisory committees and national industry standards. Also, students have the opportunity for hands-on work-based learning experiences; whatever delivery method is used. During the 2019-20 school year, over 23,000 students enrolled in at least one CTE course, which is about 72% of

the state's high school student population. Students enrolled in a total of 36,818 courses. Of those students, 8,129 were classified as a CTE Concentrator, or student that had completed at least two credits in a CTE Program. The impact of Career and Technical Education on graduation rates is telling. In 2018-19, graduation rates across the state was 88%. The CTE Concentrators graduation rate was 95.87%. Native American concentrators graduated at 91.26% compared to all Native American students' graduation rate of 72%.

The Department of Career and Technical supports CTE programs in our schools and centers by providing technical assistance, professional development, and funding. CTE programs at our high schools are reimbursed 27% of certain operating expenditures and CTE centers are reimbursed at 40%. The governing body of an area career and technology center consists of representatives from its member schools. This ensures a center is a partnership and not simply a vendor serving customers. Centers can often provide programs many school districts cannot because smaller schools may not be able to operate these programs to scale. Programs such as building trades, health careers and welding typically are types of programs often provided by centers because multiple schools are needed to make the program efficient.

What HB1380 would do, if passed and amended to include CTE funding, it would provide sustainable long-term funding for the continued expansion and creation of CTE programs. On an annual basis, the Department of Career and Technical Education receives applications from schools and centers for new and expanding programs. These programs are created or expanded because of student interest and industry requests. There is continued interest coming from our business community for more CTE

programming, that will help students discover their career paths, pursue the appropriate post-secondary direction, whether that is work, military, college or university, and cut down on unnecessary student loan debt.

North Dakota's Career and Technical Education community does a phenomenal job providing access to quality CTE programs, whether provided by schools or Centers, but gaps still exist. Those gaps are both geographic and program offerings. Additional funding would provide local administrators the security their expanding CTE programs would have funding long term, to create new programs, provide more choice and options for our students and help fill the workforce needs of now and future.

This concludes my testimony and I am here to answer any questions you may have.