



THE CHAMBER

FARGO MOORHEAD WEST FARGO

FMWF Support for HB 1003 – NDSU Budget

January 11th, 2023

Chairman Nathe and members of the House Appropriations - Education and Environment Division Committee:

For the record, my name is Shannon Full and I have the pleasure of serving as the President/ CEO for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo (FMWF) Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber's mission is to be a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity for businesses, members, and the greater community. On behalf of our over 1,900 members, I respectfully offer testimony in support of House Bill 1003, specifically as it relates to the budget of North Dakota State University (NDSU).

As you may know, NDSU provides the Fargo region and state of North Dakota with significant economic and community impact. NDSU serves as one of our region's strongest assets in the recruitment of individuals. The Chamber has been working with our higher education partners to establish creative solutions to better retain these students. Currently, 80% of NDSU graduates from North Dakota stay in the state for their first job, and 40% of NDSU graduates from Minnesota stay in North Dakota for their first job. So truly, NDSU is a catalyst for regional workforce attraction, creating pathways to workforce. In addition to the attraction of students, NDSU, as an R1 research institution, attracts world-class researchers. Educational Institutions, like NDSU, provide North Dakota with a competitive advantage in the demand for workforce.

In order to attract workforce, we must provide institutions with quality-of-life assets and placemaking infrastructure, such as state-of-the-art facilities. For example, providing students and faculty with a world-class engineering facility. This specific capital project has been on NDSU's list of priorities since 2014 as the existing facilities are inadequate to meet the current and future workforce demands of the state. The proposed facility offers students a modernized, applicable, and hands-on educational experience, which in turn attracts high-quality students. Currently, there is an increased demand across North Dakota for engineering graduates with 5,800 North Dakota jobs requiring an engineering degree. A number of our members throughout the engineering industry have provided letters of support, on behalf of this project.

In closing, I would like to take a moment to thank Dr. Cook for his courageous leadership in moving this institution forward. Our business and community leaders have been extremely impressed early on with Dr. Cook's attentiveness to the state's workforce demands and his willingness to make tough decisions. I confidently believe that under Dr. Cook's steadfast leadership, the future of NDSU is bright and headed in the right direction, and as such, I'd respectfully ask for the state's continued support in the growth and vibrancy of North Dakota State University.

On behalf of our members, I would like to thank the committee for their time and consideration this morning.

Respectfully,

Shannon Full
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