



January 17th, 2023

To: Chairman Vigesaa and Members of the House Appropriations Committee

My name is Aaron Anderson and I have the pleasure of working for the Southwest Area CTE Academy (SW CTE) in Dickinson, ND. SW CTE is currently a partnership of seven high schools, Dickinson State University and numerous business and industry partners in SW ND. As we continue to move forward with this project, we continue to add schools and business partners that are committed to providing high quality Career and Technical Education to help train and develop the next generation of North Dakota workers.

I must thank the 67th Legislative Assembly for their vision in providing funding to help start new and expand CTE Academies/Centers around the state. SW CTE was fortunate to be successful in our CTE Capitol Projects grant with the total award of \$10 million with the current portion of our grant of \$6.67 million being accessible to move our project forward. This award allowed us to begin construction/renovation this past fall on part of our project at the 40-acre former Haliburton Campus on the north side of Dickinson. Our plan is to renovate three industrial buildings and outdoor spaces that will house training programs for in-demand careers for our region.

In the fall of 2021, we anticipated the construction alone would cost us approximately \$8.3 million but as we waited for the funds become available, we seen costs continue to rise. After extensive redesigns for cost cutting measures, we have found our new bids to come back at over \$11.7 million in November 2022. This number doesn't account for the additional equipment, technology and furnishings we will need for these programs and facilities. We know inflation is hitting everyone very hard but your support of HB1099 would allow us to continue additional phases of our project to help meet the increasing workforce demands of our state.

With the partial funding we were able to begin renovation of Building A in September and will be moving into this space shortly to offer health science classes that include CNA, EMR, pharmacy tech, dental assisting, firefighting certification programs and other related programs tied to health and safety careers. Renovation on Building B is in full swing with anticipated completion by August 2023. This building will house programs that include high school welding, diesel technology, automotive technology, culinary arts and engineering/manufacturing. In addition, this facility will house Dickinson State University programs in welding and diesel technology. Building C is the part of our project that is currently on hold waiting for the funds in this bill to be released. Programs such as CDL, heavy equipment operating, construction technology (plumbing, electrical, HVAC), agricultural education, and drafting will not have a place at SW CTE until we can secure that additional funding. The remaining \$3.3 million of our grant will allow us to continue moving forward with some of our plan and we are hopeful for your additional support during this legislative session to consider our inflationary costs we are encountering with construction and equipment acquisition. We have a great group of local contractors that are doing their best to hold their bids, but we already know the costs have increased since our bid

opening in late November. We have secured the required match for our project including additional funds but right now some of our private funding is contingent until Building C becomes a reality.

I encourage you to support the passing of HB1169 so projects around the state can move forward and create lasting impacts with students and support our states growing workforce needs.

Sincerely,

Aaron Anderson
CTE Director
Southwest Area CTE Academy
Dickinson Public Schools