



**House Education
HB1163**

January 24, 2023

Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education, for the record, my name is Wayde Sick, State Director for the Department of Career and Technical Education. I am here testifying in a neutral stance to HB1163. The reason for the neutral stance, although much of my testimony appears I am in opposition, is because I agree the conversation on creating a Career and Technical Education graduation pathway is a discussion we need to have, but we need to ensure we do not create negative unintended consequences. As we continue to see more emphasis on Career and Technical Education, it is natural to consider providing a CTE graduation pathway. Many of the concerns I bring up today are the Department's concerns as well as those concerns collected from local CTE Directors.

First, due to the current opportunities for a school district to apply for the Innovation Waiver from the Department of Public Instruction or to adopt the Learning Continuum, passed in the 2021 Legislative Session, schools can create this pathway locally. With these options, school districts can award high school credit in general education courses, through alternative ways, such as CTE coursework or community experiences. A student can still have a high school diploma with a focus on Career and Technical Education, but be awarded general education credit, through alignment of common standards across the different coursework. My

partners at the Department of Public Instruction can define that process much better than I can.

A number of proposed requirements may be a concern. Once a student goes down this path, it may be difficult if it is decided to pursue the traditional route. Also, many high schools do not provide the required five units of Career and Technical Education in a single pathway. Students may need to enroll in multiple CTE pathways, which may be unrelated, to meet the requirement. The work-based learning graduation requirement, although is exciting, is still growing and may be difficult to provide to every student pursuing this pathway. Also, would we inadvertently make it difficult for students to enroll at a four-year institution as the current graduation requirements model university admission requirements. Many of the CTE pathways, that start in high school, require post-secondary education. To continue, it is concerning to include a required score, either for the ACT or WorkKeys to graduate. A student may complete all the requirements, but not score the appropriate score.

As I mentioned earlier, I am supportive of this conversation, but have concerns with the bill as written. If this bill is to pass, I feel it would be best to amend it to an interim study to review alternate graduation opportunities that may have an emphasis on Career and Technical Education or consider encouraging school districts to utilize existing mechanisms, such as the Innovation Waiver or Learning Continuum.

This concludes my testimony, and I am happy to stand for questions.