

January 18, 2023

Chairman Heinert and Members of the Committee,

My name is Marcus Lewton, and I am the superintendent of Dickinson Public Schools. I submit this letter in support of House Bill 1178.

Over two years ago, I sat on a community task force to develop a regional CTE Center in Southwest, ND. We created this task force in response to the dire need for a trained workforce for local businesses and industries and to provide much-needed opportunities for students in the region.

The important part is that this idea for a regional center was not the creation of a few educators but instead a table full of business leaders, legislators, community members, and educators. Our community asked for a solution to the problem of the lack of trained employees in Southwest ND, and this group worked tirelessly to find an answer.

Dickinson State University, along with Trinity Catholic Schools, was an essential part of the development of the Southwest Career & Technical Education Academy. I support this bill as it further engages the necessary stakeholders in developing a Center to meet the needs of our region.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Sincerely,

Marcus Lewton, Ed.D.