

**HB1470**

House Education Committee

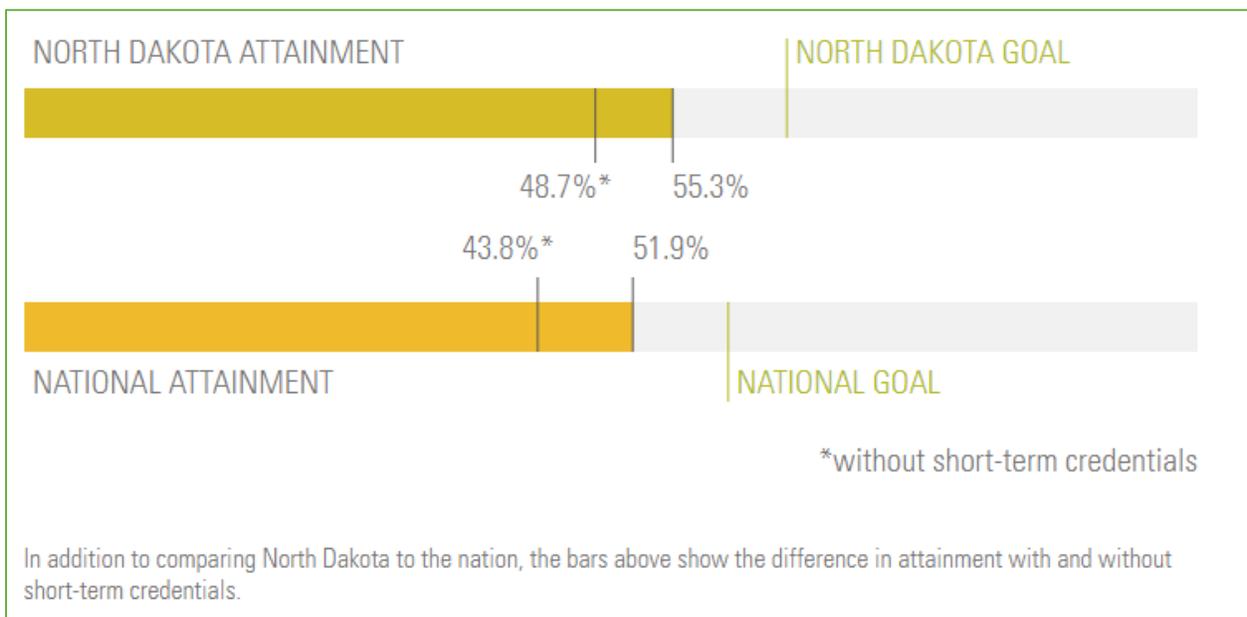
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Chair Heinert and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Lisa Johnson, and I serve as the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs for the North Dakota University System. I am here today on behalf of the North Dakota University System to provide testimony in support of HB1470.

The Lumina Foundation has indicated that by 2025, 60 percent of Americans, ages 25-64, will need some type of high-quality credential beyond high school to fulfill workforce needs. The Lumina Foundation tracks not only national progress towards this attainment goal but produces a report roughly every other year containing state level data—some which I’m sharing with you today.

The state of North Dakota established a goal of 65%—slightly above that of the state national goal of 60 percent. To reach that goal, the North Dakota will have to maintain current rates of attainment, but also significantly increase the number of people who enroll in programs and earn all types of credentials beyond high school. With the inclusion of workforce certificates (beginning in 2014) and industry certifications (in 2018), North Dakota’s overall rate of educational attainment has increased by 11.6 percentage points since 2009.



### North Dakota Degree Attainment by County (2019)

Attainment is shown here as the percentage of people with an associate degree or higher.



This bill, supporting “back to college” or a return of individuals age 25 or older with some college and no degree or no college at all encourages individuals to consider a return to college to complete high quality certificates, associate degrees or higher, or industry credentials to meet the state’s greatest workforce needs. As you can see, particularly when examining attainment by county—we have the potential to expand the number of credentials among individuals as 25 or older.

In response to this growing demand, the NDUS has developed over 300 new certificate programs in the last five years—at all levels (dual credit, undergraduate, graduate, non-degree). These short-term certificates enable institutions to combine or stack credentials to more nimbly respond to immediate and emerging workforce needs. Further, enables students to stop out, start up, or simply complete their degree in smaller increments. The NDUS supports a “Do Pass” recommendation on HB1470.