



GREATER NORTH DAKOTA CHAMBER
HB 1543
Joint Appropriations Committee
October 22, 2023

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Andrea Pfennig with the Greater North Dakota Chamber. GNDC is North Dakota's largest statewide business advocacy organization, with membership represented by small and large businesses, local chambers, and trade and industry associations across the state. We stand in **support** of House Bill 1543.

Access to workforce continues to be an issue impacting businesses in North Dakota. GNDC recently completed an economics and employer membership survey in which 74% of respondents indicated they were having trouble hiring employees.

Our members support maximizing the flexibility and responsiveness of K-12, two and four-year educational institutions, and other expanded educational opportunities to meet local training needs and demands.

The Department of Career and Technical Education's Statewide Area Career Center Initiative grant program is an important resource that will help train the next generation of North Dakotan workers learn high demand job skills.

We hope you will support the \$26.5 million in funds to help defray inflationary costs of existing approved projects and urge a Do Pass recommendation on HB 1543. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, this concludes my comments. Thank you and I'd be happy to answer any questions.