



North Dakota Senate Appropriations Committee
Chairman Brad Bekkedahl
March 8, 2023

Re: House Bill 1003

Chairman Bekkedahl and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee,

Good morning. My name is Gabi Oberg and I currently attend the University of Jamestown. I'm originally from Washburn, North Dakota, and am a Sophomore studying theater and English education, and my goal to be a teacher after graduation. I am currently also serving as a Senator in our Student Senate.

One of the reasons I chose the University of Jamestown was for the community there. I've been able to become involved in several organizations, like Student Senate, theater, and SET which is the organization in charge of planning, executing, and facilitating events for students on campus. I love that everywhere I go on campus, I can connect with someone. Being a Jimmie also means leaving the community better than you found it, by finding a way to make an impact.

I'm here today to speak in support of HB 1003, and echo Executive Vice President Lawrence's request for the University of Jamestown, and other North Dakota, nonpublic universities to be included in the matching grant program, known as challenge grants.

Jamestown students are currently able to access several of the state's scholarships. Adding an additional scholarship through the challenge grant program would give students at UJ even more opportunities. Excluding the private colleges however, limits options for students who are trying to find the right fit in their higher education program—something that's increasingly hard to do these days.

Our donors and alumni feel as strongly about the University as my current peers do. They are filled with pride for what UJ represents. They want to see it as a place for any future North Dakota college student to feel welcome, at-home, and see a place where they can pursue their educational goals.

With the state of North Dakota's support, the University of Jamestown's foundation could double the value of the private donations it receives and increase its scholarship offerings for additional students. You would be sending a message to all North Dakota students that you support whatever path is best for their future and career goals, including staying in North Dakota for our education and future careers. That would be the impact this legislature could have on our community, leaving it better than you found it.

Thank you for your time and allowing me to speak today. I am grateful for the opportunity and hope you will consider our request to be included in the challenge grant program.

Thank you,

Gabi Oberg
Junior, University of Jamestown