

SB 2197 TESTIMONY - Sen. Karen K. Krebsbach District 40

Date: Wed, Jan 18, 2023, 8:43 AM

Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record I am Senator Karen K. Krebsbach, State Senator District 40, Minot, ND.

SB 2197 creates and enacts a new section entitled "re-energize North Dakota scholarship", it provides for an appropriation and an expiration date.

Section I provides the guidelines for the scholarships which will be under the State Board of Higher Education for the purpose of recruiting and retaining individuals in ND to work in the Oil and Gas Industry. We know the emphasis being placed on workforce and the oil and gas industry employees account for 50,000 and are in desperate need of thousands more.

Applicants are eligible for the re-energize North Dakota scholarship if they are or were employed in the oil and gas industry in an oil and gas producing county for a minimum of six month or is an immediate family member of a current or former employee in the oil and gas industry in a producing county for a minimum of six months. The scholarships must be awarded in the eligible priority identified in subsection two of the bill.

Further guidelines spell out that the recipient must attend a qualifying educational program that results in attainment of workforce training credential, certificate, associate degree, bachelors or master degree and it must be provided at an institution under control of the State Board of Higher Education.

After the initial award the recipient must maintain academic progress in the eligible program to continue receiving the re-energize North Dakota scholarship. Scholarships may be awarded in the amount of \$2,000 per quarter, semester or term. It is limited to \$16,000 per individual and can be used for tuition, fees, books and supplies required for the educational program.

The State Board of Higher Education shall adopt policies and procedures to administer the re-energize scholarship program. The bill spells out the oil and gas producing eligible counties. There was an error of omitting McLean County and this will be corrected by an amendment. The other counties are Billings, Bottineau, Bowman, Burke, Divide, Dunn, Golden Valley, McHenry, McKenzie, Mountrail, Renville, Slope, Stark, Ward and Williams.

Sec 2. In this section we find the appropriation from the general fund in the amount of \$10,250,000 or what may be a necessary to the State Board of Higher Education for purpose of awarding the re-energize North Dakota scholarships for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2025. The State Board may use up to \$250,000 for student financial assistance and scholarship programs coordination and marketing. The State Board of Higher Education is authorized one full time equivalent position.

Sec 3. Expiration Date Section I of this act is effective through June 30, 2027 and after that date is ineffective.
