



**Senate Appropriations Committee – HB 1003**

**Senator Brad Bekkedahl, Chair**

**March 3, 2023**

Chairman Bekkedahl, Members of the Committee:

My name is Brian Ritter and I am the President & CEO of the Bismarck Mandan Chamber EDC. Please accept the following testimony on behalf of our organization in support of HB 1003

The North Dakota University System plays a critical role in addressing the single most pressing issue impacting our members; workforce. There are more than 2,300 open jobs currently in Burleigh and Morton Counties, combined, and this bill does a couple of things to impact both that situation and our community.

- First, HB 1003 contains funding for a Workforce Education Innovation Program as previously outlined in HB 1241 and contains funding for the successful Career Builders Program.
- Second, HB 1003 includes funding that will allow Bismarck State College to finish the highly anticipated Polytechnic Building and to replace the existing Armory building on campus.

The funding for the aforementioned workforce development initiatives and improvements to BSC's campus will go a long way towards training our community's next generation of workers. As such, I would respectfully ask that the Committee give a DO PASS recommendation to HB 1003.