

Dear Chair Elkin and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I write in opposition to HB1446. I am offering my testimony as a private citizen, although it is through the lens of my years of experience as a tenured Associate Professor of Mathematics at Bismarck State College.

I was fortunate enough to sit in on Representative Lefor's Zoom forum earlier this year as well as attend the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee hearing. My comments reflect my concerns with commentary during both of those meetings.

It seems as though the crux of Representative Lefor's argument for this bill is that meaningful review of tenured faculty isn't happening, because if it was, more tenured faculty would be dismissed. Unfortunately, no data was presented to substantiate this claim. Members of the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee also asked those testifying about the dismissal of tenured faculty. What percentage of tenured faculty need to be fired in order to satisfy everyone? A search for statistics regarding the percentage of workers fired from the private sector after being with the same company for 6 or more years proved unsuccessful—but I would imagine that number, for comparison, is also quite low.

At BSC, we may apply for tenure in our sixth year. By that time, we have been in our positions longer than the 4.1 years the average American worker stays at one job ([Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), 2022). In applying for tenure, we show that we have invested ourselves in our students, our campus, and our university system. Receiving tenure shows that our colleagues, administration, and university system believe us to be assets to our institution. Meaningful review post-tenure does happen. Students complete evaluations every semester; additionally, faculty are evaluated annually by a supervisor (formerly department chairs; now, assistant deans). Perhaps the reason tenured faculty are not fired after meaningful review is that they are found to be doing their jobs.

I would encourage this committee to spend time as a tenured faculty member at BSC. You'll find yourself teaching classes, of course, but also skipping lunch to help students outside of office hours, replying to homework question emails after you've put your kids to bed, spending weekends recording lectures for your online courses, searching for moments to grade students' work, participating in campus service work, contributing to state-wide committees, attending professional learning opportunities, keeping up-to-date membership in professional organizations...the list goes on. Oh, and I would be remiss not to mention putting any and all other work aside when a student or advisee stops by your office.

I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS on HB1446. Thank you for your service to the state of North Dakota and your time spent reviewing this testimony.

Sincerely,
Katrina Eberhart, PhD