

March 9, 2023

To Chairman Wobbema and the Senate Workforce Development Committee:

My name is Matt Naugle and I am a workforce development specialist with Essentia Health in Fargo. Prior to that, I was an educator and education administrator for over 20 years. I am writing to express my support for HB1232.

I am honored to speak on behalf of two of my greatest professional passions. First, developing meaningful and authentic experiences for our communities of learners in career exploration. Second, creating programs that lead to a well-informed and prepared workforce.

Many communities experience a variety of barriers when developing and implementing programs for career readiness. School districts often have limitations due to the cost of transportation, limited areas of teacher licensure, budgets for expanding student resources, and limited availability to first-hand experiences with local employers. Many of our talented students become disengaged with a curriculum and content that is highly driven by 4 year degree pathways. Student experiences are limited by industry standards, such as safety measures and privacy expectations while making connections for apprenticeships and job shadowing opportunities.

HB 1232 would leverage technology and software tools to give a lift to all communities of learners in the field of career development. The technology will assist us in developing programs that bring equity to the student experience, regardless of their community resources. Sparsity and transportation costs are reduced through the development of hybrid models of content delivery. Schools with smaller populations are provided more access to content that would normally be limited by the size of their staff and number of electives available. Students will become engaged with exposure to authentic experiences that would not be available locally, are limited by industry standards, and not part of their career awareness curriculum. Further, HB 1232 will allow career experience touch points become regular and embedded in their curriculum as opposed to “one and done” experiences such as career fairs. HB 1232 will bring real world experiences to classroom conversations that improve student career outcomes and create opportunities for more meaningful career discussions.

Essentia Health has collaborated with Be More Colorful, to create engaging, authentic, and meaningful immersive classroom content. We have created video experiences that provide a journey in the day of a professional’s life. Students are interacting with the setting, duties, and the professional pathways of specific, and lesser known careers in health care. We are excited to see what the future holds for our workforce development efforts with new technology to make careers experiences more accessible.

I strongly encourage you to recommend a do-pass for HB 1232.

Sincerely,

Matthew Naugle

Workforce Development Specialist

Essentia Health