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HB1241

Senate Education Committee

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Chair Wobbema, Vice-Chair Axtman and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee, my name is Rod Flanigan and I serve as the President of North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS). I write this letter today on behalf of NCSCS, our students (both current and prospective), faculty, and staff to provide written testimony in support of HB1241.

As originally written by Representative Schreiber-Beck, HB1241 would have provided \$24,000,000 to the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education to distribute funds to any/all of the 11 higher education institutions throughout the state for the purpose of building, growing, and developing innovative workforce academic programs, initiatives, and partnerships. While I am in favor of this bill, **I believe it would be beneficial if language is adopted defining how the funds would be distributed to the various state institutions.** By adding such language to the bill, it will provide both equity and clarity for how the funds are intended to be used and distributed.

If passed, this bill would provide much needed funding to NDSCS allowing us to develop some of the innovative programs that we have wanted to build but have been unable to due to lack of funding. The sort of funding shortfall we are facing really limits what we can do for our academic programs and departments. Funding provided through HB1241 would allow us to build some very important programs. Programs that are in discussion at NDSCS include: Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), Fire Science, Electric Vehicle (EV) Technician (both automotive and construction equipment), Radiology Technician, Virtual Reality/Mixed Reality Technician, Aviation Maintenance Technician (A & P), and several others. We believe these programs can not only help build enrollment at NDSCS, but also fill the pipeline of very talented and skilled workforce in much needed positions throughout the state.

This concludes my testimony related to HB1241. I respectfully request that you vote in favor of this bill.

Thank you so much for all you do, and for your support of higher education throughout the state of North Dakota!

Respectfully submitted,

Rod Flanigan, Ph.D.
President, NDSCS

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