

Chairman Nathe and Members of the Committee:

I am Cynthia Schreiber-Beck, District 25 Representative. House Bill No. 1221 is to fund the policy bill HB1241 from the 2023 session that is now 15-10-75 in the North Dakota Century Code and commonly referred to as the workforce education innovation program. The appropriation portion of the 2023 bill was not funded, thus this bill for an appropriation for \$24 million.

The Board of Higher Education would be in control of the fund. As stated below in 15-10-75, funds would be awarded for the creation or enhancement of educational programs that address the workforce needs of North Dakota business and industry.

A current example of this is the Airframe and Powerplant Program in the establishment phase at the North Dakota State College of Science. The innovative funding could be utilized for curriculum development, equipment, facility modifications, hiring and training instructors, program promotion, and enhancement of postsecondary partnerships with primary and secondary schools. Without a source of funding, program development is difficult since the payback does not begin until students achieve completed credits.

The higher education institutions are expected to be innovative but without funds for program development, it is difficult.

I encourage your favorable consideration of House Bill No. 1221.

15-10-75. Workforce education innovation program - Report to legislative management.

1. The state board of higher education may provide award funds to institutions under its control to create or enhance educational programs that address the workforce needs of North Dakota business and industry. An award made under this section may be used for curriculum development, equipment and technology purchases, facility modifications and equipment installation, hiring and training new and existing instructors, educational program promotion, and enhancement of postsecondary partnerships with primary and secondary schools.

2. The state board of higher education shall provide a biennial program report to the legislative management by September first of each even-numbered year. The report must include information by institution regarding:

a. The number, amount, and type of awards;

b. The name of each educational program created, enhanced, or promoted;

c. The amount and percentage of funds used for leadership and coordination costs; and d. Detailed expense reports, including the type of equipment and technology purchased and the number of instructors hired or trained.