

Dear North Dakota Legislators,

I am writing to express strong opposition to HB 1437, which would ban tenure at North Dakota's two-year colleges for faculty hired after July 1, 2026. This bill is unnecessary, harmful to our higher education institutions, and threatens the quality of education available to North Dakota students.

Tenure is not a job security measure—it is a safeguard for academic freedom and a tool for attracting and retaining high-quality educators. By removing tenure, HB 1437 would create a chilling effect on the ability of faculty to thoroughly educate students and conduct research without fear of political or administrative retaliation. Academic freedom is essential to ensuring that North Dakota's students receive a rigorous, well-rounded education that prepares them for the workforce and civic life.

Moreover, the passage of HB 1437 would weaken North Dakota's ability to compete for top-tier faculty. Community colleges play a critical role in workforce development, and removing tenure protections will make it harder to recruit and retain the best educators for these institutions. Weakening the foundation of our community colleges ultimately harms our entire university system and the reputation of higher education in North Dakota.

This bill is a solution in search of a problem. North Dakota should be focused on strengthening our higher education institutions, not dismantling the very structures that allow them to thrive. I urge you to give HB 1437 a DO NOT PASS and stand in support of our educators, students, and the future of higher education in our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Angela Smith