



Testimony for the 69th Legislative Assembly – Government and Veterans Affairs

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Bill: HB 1437

Position: Neutral

Chairman Schauer and Members of the Government and Veterans Affairs Committee:

My name is Andy Armacost, and I serve as the President of the University of North Dakota. I should begin by acknowledging the work of Representative Motschenbacher on this bill, and for his willingness to consider amendments to the original bill. It is clear that Representative Motschenbacher, the North Dakota Legislature, the State Board of Higher Education, and the University of North Dakota all seek to improve the academic opportunities available to students and to enhance the reputation and impact of the entire North Dakota University System.

Tenure is a cornerstone of a successful academic enterprise, as it supports academic freedom and the advancement of freedom of speech. It supports the reputation of our universities and allows us to build a highly qualified and productive faculty, which is the very basis of a sound educational system. It supports innovation and economic prosperity within the state, which advances the interests of our citizens.

There must be systems of accountability and meaningful review protocols attached to any tenure system in order to promote enterprise, excellence, and ongoing productivity. This is true whether tenure exists at a 2-year or 4-year institution, and the responsibility for maintaining systems of accountability and meaningful review protocols falls on individual institutions and on the State Board of Higher Education.

The University of North Dakota supports the efforts of the State Board of Higher Education and endorses the work of the SBHE Ad Hoc Committee on Tenure and Post-Tenure Review. Should it be deemed necessary by the legislature to add tenure language to Century Code, we would humbly advocate for legislation that is in line with the recommendations and principles established in the report of that SBHE ad hoc committee, particularly the directives for improved post-tenure review protocols at each campus under the control of the SBHE. Thank you.