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My name is Lloyd Halvorson. I am the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs at Lake Region State College in Devils Lake. I speak on behalf of Lake Region State College and communicate to this committee the official position of our institution.

I have been employed with Lake Region for 23 years. My first ten years as a post-secondary tenured Assistant Professor of Law Enforcement and Director of Peace Officer Training. For the past 13 years, I have served as the senior leader responsible for all academic and career and technical education programs; including all full-time faculty, part time faculty, and those teaching dual credit for us in the high schools.

Some of the information presented today regarding shared governance and academic freedom comes directly from a white paper submitted to the NDUS in April 2024 by four of the five NDUS community college Chief Academic Officers, Dr. Atallah at WSC, Dr. Karch, at NDSCS, Kayla O'Toole at DCB, and myself. That white paper has been electronically submitted to the committee.

I want to start with the numbers. Last year, I submitted a report to the NDUS that showed LRSC having 37 full time positions; 16 with tenure and 19 without. In addition to those 37 faculty, we employ 90 part time faculty, and work with another 42 dual credit instructors. The reality is that less than half, just 43% of our full-time faculty have tenure; and overall, just 13% of the total number of instructional faculty have tenure.

Lake Region State College has maintained a proper balance with respect to full-time faculty, and we get maximum contribution from part time faculty who are crucial to our overall mission to provide a quality but affordable education.

Why is tenure important? First, Recruitment and Retention of high-quality faculty is crucial to what we do. You may hear someone tell you, *some two-year schools in other states don't offer faculty tenure; why do we need it here?*

This is true, some do not. But two-year schools in many place across the county are not comprehensive community colleges either. They are technical colleges and technical colleges are verry different. How?

1. The community colleges in the NDUS have a full academic transfer program with guaranteed transfer and common course numbering that is binding on all 11 institutions, including UND and NDSU; many two-year technical colleges do not have such a guarantee of transfer or systemwide common course numbering like we do.
2. All of the NDUS community colleges have on-campus housing that provides for the full residential living and learning experience. Nationwide, only 27% of two-year colleges have on campus housing (AACC Data Points 2/19/2024).
3. We have a full complement of NJCAA Division I, II, and III athletic teams; many two-year technical colleges do not have NJCAA athletics.

As a result, we look more like and compete for students and faculty with our regional four-year colleges and universities. Recruitment and retention is especially challenging considering that some of our community colleges are not located in highly populated urban areas and we must convince future faculty to move across the state or country to teach here. This can be difficult when you are only offering a candidate a special appointment that can be just a one-and-done with no renewal without cause completely at the discretion of the institution.

Next, tenure is important to protect academic freedom. Without tenure, the administration could sanitize the curriculum (by hiring and non-renewing faculty) to meet the administration's perspective or beliefs on inherently debatable subjects.

It is important to recognize that college presidents are subject to political forces, hold strong views on social, religious, and cultural issues, and can and do at times interfere in the teaching and learning process. The faculty must have the ability to teach our students what they need to secure employment across a variety of industries, despite the socio-political views of the governor, chancellor, president, or provost. Without tenure, these faculty would put their livelihood at risk every year for not teaching the curriculum the way those in authority demand.

Perhaps Dr. Michelle Murphy, former Lake Region State College Professor of Biology, communicates this need perfectly when she writes, *"As a scholar who publishes and presents nationally, tenure provides protection from coercion and bias in my data and the conclusions drawn from them. Tenure provides assurance to the scholarly community that I am free from pressure to skew my research in a way that would facilitate job security. With tenure, I can publish and present the data as it is, not as my administration wishes it to be."*

Finally, shared governance. This is fundamental to the success of higher education. The faculty must have the security that the tenure processes provide in order to be empowered and assertive in their shared governance role. If a college president has universal authority to non-renew every member of the faculty at the end of every year, faculty will be less likely to be assertive in this way.

I'll make two final points. One, tenure is not a lifetime appointment as some would say. Faculty with tenure can be terminated for not meeting expectations. Termination for cause is real. There is a misconception that tenured faculty cannot be let go for cause. This is absolutely not true.

The second point, if a college or university has a problem with tenure, they do not have a faculty problem, they have an administrative problem. If, over the years, the college's leadership allowed tenured faculty to retire on duty, that is an administrative failure, not a faculty or tenure failure. I say that as having been both. Don't let anyone misrepresent this. A good leader and a quality administrator will know how to motivate people and when they find one that can't be motivated and is not meeting expectations, they know how to utilize policy to terminate for cause.

You, as legislators, need not be afraid of tenure or of the faculty. The faculty are the ones on the ground floor carrying out and living the mission every day. If you want to make sure colleges are taking care of business, I would encourage you to watch over and hover on the administrative side of things. Take time to study this and work with the SBHE to ensure that campus leadership is not asleep at the wheel, that policies around tenure are solid, and that administrators have set high expectations for faculty, all faculty, and that they hold themselves and those they supervise accountable.

I strongly encourage this committee to give HB 1437 a unanimous "Do Not Pass" recommendation. I cannot think of one benefit the State of ND would reap by taking tenure away from Lake Region State College. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today.

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Academic and Student Affairs & Chief of Police**

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