



## Letter of Support – SB 2003

Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Chairman Sorvaag and Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee - Education and Environment Division,

For the record, my name is Cale Dunwoody, and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 2003.

At the FMWF Chamber, our mission is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. Access to an educated and trained workforce remains a top concern for businesses across the state. In order to effectively compete on a global scale for talent, both our state and private industry must invest in innovative solutions to address this crisis. Higher education plays a critical role in providing a pipeline of educated and skilled employees to meet the workforce needs throughout the state.

North Dakota State University (NDSU) continues to serve as a crucial state asset, that provides students from across North Dakota, the Midwest, and the nation with essential educational opportunities and experiences in high-demand industry sectors – ultimately fostering a robust pipeline of high-quality workers to fuel our state’s economy and tax base. For example, 83% of North Dakota students and 40% of Minnesota students who graduate from NDSU stay in North Dakota to live and work. This data further demonstrates how essential NDSU is in serving as a direct talent pipeline to local businesses.

Under the leadership of President Cook, and the steadfast support of the North Dakota Legislative Assembly, NDSU has made strategic decisions that uniquely position them to meet future workforce and research challenges. To continue this momentum, we encourage this committee to continue to make strategic investments to enhance NDSU’s impact. These resources will allow NDSU to further align programs and career pathways with current industry demands, and ensure students are best prepared for our ever-evolving workforce environment.

As the 69th Legislative Assembly considers Senate Bill 2003, we encourage this committee to maintain its longstanding support for higher education. Institutions, like NDSU, are essential to fueling the growth and prosperity of North Dakota and addressing our state’s workforce challenges.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Cale Dunwoody  
Vice President of Public Policy  
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce