



GREATER NORTH DAKOTA CHAMBER
HB 1382
House Education Committee
Chairman Pat Heinert
January 31, 2023

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Andrea Pfennig with the Greater North Dakota Chamber. GNDC is North Dakota's largest statewide business advocacy organization, with membership represented by small and large businesses, local chambers, and trade and industry associations across the state. We stand in **support** of House Bill 1382.

Recently, GNDC partnered with the NDSU Challey Institute for Global Innovation and Growth to complete a survey about the business climate in North Dakota. The survey found that 62% of respondents felt the number one factor holding businesses back is difficulty attracting and retaining qualified workers. The results of the survey were reflected in the discussions held by our members in our policy position development process.

Our members feel it is important to maximize the flexibility and responsiveness of K-12, two and four-year educational institutions, and provide expanded educational opportunities to meet local training needs and demands. We also support partnerships and resources that implement work-based learning opportunities to cultivate workforce attraction and retention.

The ability to have access to a skilled workforce is a critical issue impacting the business community. We feel that expanding the ND Scholarship to be used for apprenticeship experiences would be a good piece of the solution to the workforce challenge, benefiting both students and North Dakota businesses.

We urge a Do Pass recommendation on HB 1382. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, this concludes my comments. Thank you and I'd be happy to answer any questions.