

## Testimony



### HOUSE BILL NO. 1540

### Senate Appropriations

April 24, 2023

Senator Bekkedahl and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee. The Valley Prosperity Partnership (VPP) is a membership organization led by business executives – joined by leaders from higher education, economic development, and chambers of commerce – to advance and advocate for shared strategic economic development opportunities that will strengthen and diversify the Red River Valley region and the entirety of North Dakota.

Employers of all sizes in all sectors of North Dakota’s economy depend on working parents. Working parents, in turn, depend upon childcare. Without it, many parents – particularly mothers – cannot join or rejoin the labor force.

Quality childcare is an early learning setting for young children that creates a foundation for future learning, including school readiness. This makes childcare a two-generation support for working families, helping parents return to the workforce while also giving kids a future-learning jump start.

The VPP supports HB1540 and strongly endorses funding for childcare that will positively impact availability, affordability, and workforce. Closing the childcare gap is a top priority for the VPP and employers throughout North Dakota.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

## Valley Prosperity Partnership Steering Committee

Brian Johnson, CEO, Choice Bank,  
Co-Chair Valley Prosperity Partnership\*

Judd Graham, Market President  
Dacotah Bank - Fargo  
Co-Chair Valley Prosperity  
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Jonathan Holth, JLG Architects  
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Marshal Albright, President & CEO  
Cass County Electric Cooperative,

Andrew Armacost, President  
University of North Dakota

Steve Burian, President & CEO  
Burian & Associates

Dan Conrad, President & CEO  
Blue Cross Blue Shield North Dakota

David Cook, President  
North Dakota State University

Tim Curoe, CEO  
RD Offutt Company

Mylo Einarson, President & CEO  
Nodak Electric Cooperative

Chad Flanagan, Partner  
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Rod Flanigan, President  
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Todd Forkel, CEO  
Altru Health System

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Shawn Gaddie, Director of Infrastructure  
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Gate City Bank

Tiffany Lawrence, CEO & President  
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Midco

Jeff Melgaard, Vice President  
Construction Engineers

Tammy Peterson, Grand Forks Region  
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Bremer Bank

Joe Raso, President & CEO  
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Roers Construction & Development

Richard Solberg, Chairman & CEO  
Bell State Bank & Trust

David White, President  
Border States Electric

Barry Wilfahrt, President & CEO  
The Chamber Grand Forks/East Grand  
Forks\*

Chris Wolf, North Valley Market President  
Alerus Financial

Delore Zimmerman, Executive Director\*

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