North Dakota Senate
Workforce Development Committee
Chairman Michael A. Wobbema

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<u>**In Support of SB 2342**</u>

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee, my name is Tom Ross and I am the Mayor of the City of Minot. Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on behalf of my community.

Minot's health care sector is undergoing a major expansion and upgrade with the construction of Trinity Health's new medical campus in the southeast section of our city. The new hospital is scheduled to open later this year, creating unique opportunities with several former Trinity Health buildings in downtown Minot.

The Downtown Hospital Building Grant Program and the Rural Workforce Hospital Grant Program created by SB2342 would provide Minot and other communities with assistance to renovate and repurpose former medical buildings into facilities that would support rural workforce development efforts.

In Minot, a community committee is discussing the potential to redevelop and repurpose former downtown Trinity Health buildings into, among other things, a school of nursing, a childcare facility, and a behavior health clinic. Expanding these types of programs would greatly enhance Minot's ability to attract, train, and retain qualified employees across a wide spectrum of industries.

This innovative approach to solving North Dakota's workforce development concerns is truly a private/public partnership that involves local cost-sharing elements as part of the grant process. That means Minot will have skin in the game, too, as we work to revitalize soon-to-be-vacant medical facilities in the center of our community.

We appreciate the previous funding from the Legislature on issues of great importance to Minot. We hope you continue to find value in supporting our community as we work to become a more resilient, responsive, and progressive city. We urge a DO PASS recommendation on SB2342.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.