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Members of the North Dakota Senate Appropriations – Government Operations Division

RE: Support for HB 1016 – Relating to provide an appropriation for defraying the expenses of the office of the adjutant general to support funding for a full-time Next Gen Leader Program Coordinator

Chairman Wanzek and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully urge your support for funding a full-time coordinator within the North Dakota National Guard (NDNG) to administer the Next Gen Leader Program, a leadership development initiative that creates structured pathways into military service for high school students across the state.

A critical component of this initiative is the Military Pathway Program, developed by the North Dakota Center for Distance Education and aligned with Career and Technical Education (CTE) Military Pathway Standards. Central Regional Area Career and Technical Education Center (CRACTC), the state's largest CTE Center in which I help lead, is working closely with NDNG to assist in delivering this program using a proven hybrid model—blending virtual instruction with hands-on regional training—that CRACTC developed and refined over the past decade of supporting schools in several different CTE Career Pathways such as Health Sciences (Medical), Aviation, Welding, and STEM.

To incentivize participation, North Dakota has integrated the Military Pathway into the Choice Ready Framework and proposed HB 1404, if passed, which will make this program count toward scholarship eligibility. This demonstrates a strong commitment to preparing students for military careers and supporting NDNG recruitment efforts.

The Military Pathway curriculum developed by the North Dakota Center for Distance Education includes:

- 1) Intro to Military Careers: Overview of service branches and roles; 2) ASVAB Essentials: Preparation for the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery; 3) Military Health & Fitness: Focus on physical and mental readiness; 4) Career Foundations in Military Leadership: Teamwork and ethical leadership; 5) Leadership Capstone: Job shadowing and real-world leadership experiences with NDNG.

The Next Gen Leader Program Coordinator is vital to the success of this initiative. This position will ensure students access meaningful military experiences that align with their coursework—such as job shadowing, leadership training, and physical assessments—and will coordinate with both NDNG and CTE centers such as CRACTC to deliver these opportunities effectively.

This is a smart investment. Through these collaborative efforts, funding this coordinator will enhance NDNG recruitment, expand military career readiness opportunities for students, and drive program growth statewide.

I respectfully request your support in funding the Next Gen Leader Program Coordinator to ensure this impactful initiative continues to serve North Dakota's students and strengthens our National Guard.

Thank you for your time, service to our great State of North Dakota, and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Lyle P Krueger

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