



Testimony for the 69th Legislative Assembly – Senate Education

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Bill: HB 1179

Position: In Opposition

Chairman Beard and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Andy Armacost, and I serve as the President of the University of North Dakota. I offer this testimony in opposition to Engrossed Bill 1179.

Two years ago, I was asked to adopt this proposed leave policy at the University of North Dakota. At that time, the legal advice provided indicated it would violate North Dakota Century Code, and the State Board of Higher Education granted each institution the authority to implement leave policy as they saw fit.

In response to the filing of 1179, we received a different legal assessment, which indicated such a policy would not violate state law, yet the SBHE reinforced their position that this should remain a campus decision.

Before making such a change to our faculty leave policy, I would first consult with our campus members to determine the interest and impact of such a change. Given the Council of College Faculty's previous testimony in opposition to this bill, we now have a good sense of their position.

I believe this to be the case of a well-intentioned legislator -- he himself is a UND faculty member -- who believes legislating a leave policy is a proper course of action. Guidance from the State Board of Higher Education indicates this is my responsibility as the institution's president.

Keep in mind that I have an obligation to all members of the campus, not just one. When I hear the widespread opposition to this change, I remain convinced that many elements of the original bill would be bad idea and that the engrossed bill's proposed study is unnecessary.

I encourage you to vote DO NOT PASS on this bill.

Thank you.