

Senate Education Committee
Chairman Todd Beard
February 18, 2025
HB 1188

Chairman Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Pam Stroklund, Career and Technical Education Director for Minot Public Schools and the Minot Area Workforce Academy (MAWA). I offer written testimony in support of HB 1188, an amendment relating to the assessment of fees for area career and technology center expenses.

As a new Area Career & Technical Center located within the Minot area, the current assessment of school districts based proportionately upon its high school enrollment as compared to the total high school enrollment of all participating school districts in the area career and technology center does not easily encourage smaller districts outside of Minot to become members of the Minot Area Workforce Academy.

The Minot Area Workforce Academy enhances the area center by offering the trade programs of Auto Collision, Auto Technology, and Commercial Driver's License. While these programs prepare students for certifications and entry level positions, they are not cheap to provide for high school students. Purchasing and maintaining the equipment and consumables, employing multiple highly qualified industry instructors, and operating facilities to train students drive up the costs within the area center.

At this time, the ND Department of Career and Technical Education does offset the cost of the programs by reimbursing the area center at a rate of 40% and 75% for new programs for a set amount of time. The remaining expenses are to be cost shared proportionately with all member schools.

Minot Public School students take full advantage of the MAWA trades offerings being located near the area center and MPS facilities being utilized by the area center. Due to scheduling conflicts and transportation issues, outlying school districts do not have the same opportunity to utilize all the services and programs offered by the area center but are expected to share in the entire costs proportionately based on their high school enrollment.

To encourage area center membership and increase student participation, I support having the option to assess a center membership fee based on high school enrollment and then, assess a fee based on the member district's access and use of the programs.

On behalf of Minot Public Schools and the Minot Area Workforce Academy, I request your support of HB 1188 as introduced by Representative Lefor and encourage a "DO PASS" recommendation:

- Remove the proportionate total cost sharing based on high school enrollment.
- Provide an option to assess a center membership fee based on high school enrollment and a fee based on access and use.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1188.