

**House Appropriations Committee**  
**Chairman Jeff Delzer**  
**February 1, 2021**

## **Testimony**

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### **HB 1431**

**Chairman Delzer** and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Mark Vollmer. I proudly serve as Superintendent of Minot Public School District #1 and Minot Air Force Base #160. I stand in front of you today to offer my support of HB 1431.

Mayor Sipma has explained, in great detail, the benefits of HB 1431 in regard to flood protection. Minot Public Schools definitely felt the impact of the Souris River Flood. All in all, the district lost 76,000,000 of infrastructure, with nearly 1/3 of our student population displaced. Thanks to the help of many agencies, including the North Dakota State Legislature, we were able to rebuild our school community.

Flood protection is a real issue for all reasons stated in Mayor Sipma's presentation. I concur with his testimony and ask your support on the many points that have been made.

I would like to draw attention to Section 11 of HB 1431, which would support CTE operational funding. This section of HB 1431 calls for funding to support Career and Technical Education in large communities throughout the state.

In a collaborative effort, Minot State University, Dakota College of Bottineau, the City of Minot and Minot Public Schools have worked to implement phase I of a community CTE center. Phase I will be operation in the Spring of 2021.

Community-based CTE is more than a dream – we are making this notion a reality

in the greater Minot area by pulling together, supporting shared-use of existing facilities, and working with business and industry to determine what training is needed to meet labor expectations.

Multi-agency collaboration has made this venture a reality in the City of Minot. HB 1431 can provide additional classroom and laboratory space to promote real-time learning for participants. This collaboration provides support for those who are seeking a degree through Minot State University or Dakota College, and also allows for retraining and continuing education to support workforce needs.

North Dakota has experienced low unemployment rates in recent years. In a tight employment market, we need to ensure our employment base has the ability to hone skills and retool, as necessary, to remain employed in North Dakota's competitive, ever-changing market.

In my 30+ years of education, I have never witnessed a more creative, innovative, or practical approach to meeting the needs of an entire community. Simply put, it is time that we break away from the notion of "our" programs, and support the advancement of flexible programming and shared use of facilities to benefit all learners of all ages.

As our world continues to change, so do the needs of our workforce. We can meet these changes head-on, keep jobs in the State of North Dakota, and remain competitive in the world market by supporting CTE advancement in our state.

Therefore, I encourage a "Do Pass" recommendation on HB 1431. I thank you for your time.