

HB 1431 Senate Testimony by Dickinson State University President

Dickinson State University enthusiastically supports House Bill 1431.

The bill provides substantial funding that could boost the efforts that have been underway for over a year in southwestern North Dakota to start a career and technical education center. Dickinson State was a founding partner in this work. Dickinson Public Schools provided the initial financial boost, by purchasing the former Halliburton property in north Dickinson, built at a cost of over \$60 million, for approximately \$6 million.

The career and technical education center will provide a major boost to Dickinson State's dual mission efforts, which focus upon providing workforce training to support southwest North Dakota industry. The CTE Center will provide laddered programs that will allow students to start their technical education before high school graduation, then continue to pursue it to the level of certification. For example, a student might take her first welding courses in high school, then start her Dickinson State education with a head start toward full welding certification. Other students, who did not have the opportunity to start their workforce training before coming to Dickinson State, could start after being admitted to our university.

Though the exact package of workforce training options is yet to be determined (and will change in the future), southwestern North Dakota industry leaders have identified needs in areas including welding, diesel and other mechanics, nursing and other health care, CDL (truck driving), heavy equipment operation, systems processing (for work in manufacturing), oil field service, agriculture, and information technology as areas of need for a trained and skilled workforce. The CTE center will match student dreams with employer needs to produce a great future for all.

In addition, Dickinson State is grateful for the support in Section 5(3)(k), which will allow Dickinson State to pursue critical projects, including renovation of Pulver Hall into a multi-use facility with offices for the DSU Theodore Roosevelt Center (and, possibly, the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library), residence hall rooms for Theodore Roosevelt Honors Leadership program students, classrooms and conference rooms for Dickinson State courses, and Theodore Roosevelt museum space for visitors. The previous legislative session approved a \$4 million appropriation that was used, as directed, toward the reconstruction of Pulver Hall (with additional DSU funding), but there was no funding for furniture, fixtures, and equipment, including additional security equipment, exhibits, and replacement of some items like doors. House Bill 1431 will allow us to complete this project and other critical projects at DSU.

--Stephen D. (Steve) Easton

President of Dickinson State University