



January 27, 2021

FMWF Chamber Support for SB 2272

Chair Schaible, Members of the Senate Education Committee,

For the record my name is Katie Mastel, and I serve as the Government Affairs & Advocacy Manager at the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (The Chamber). On behalf of our over 2,000 Chamber member businesses, we urge **support for the skilled workforce scholarship and loan repayment programs as outlined in Senate Bill 2272.**

Overwhelmingly, the most prevalent issues we hear from our businesses regarding relate to workforce. Many of our businesses are struggling to recruit and retain talent. With a plethora of higher education institutions across our state, there is great potential to capture the interest of homegrown talent in our local business opportunities. In addition, there is great room for improvement in the recruitment of a skilled workforce to our great state. Senate Bill 2272 serves as just one tool in our toolbox to accomplish both recruiting and retaining talent in skilled workforce jobs.

We are supportive of the addition of funds dedicated to the marketing of these programs as awareness rose as a continual barrier to the program's utilization. Our Chamber made an effort to disseminate information regarding these opportunities to our regional businesses through educational roundtables with ND Commerce employees and HR professionals as well as through printed information for our broader membership. Once made aware of these opportunities, they were very well received. With the assistance of a strategic and consistent statewide message related to these opportunities, we can expect the demand to expand to new levels.



Our state needs as many tools in the toolbox as possible as it relates to the workforce issues of our state, specifically surrounding recruitment and retainment. **As such, we support the continuation of the skilled workforce and loan repayment program as reflected in Senate Bill 2272.** Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Katie Mastel