

Michael Kimmel
4214 Millstone Drive
Chaska, MN 55318

March 6, 2023

Senator Steve A. Cwodzinski
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3207
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Education Policy Committee Chair Cwodzinski,

My name is Michael Kimmel, and I am a resident of Chaska. This letter is my written testimony and I'm asking for you to add this to the written record. I'm writing to express my opposition to the amendment to SF-1311. Specifically, I ask that the language on lines 19.8 through 19.11 of the original version of SF-1311 which states: "An eligible institution must not require a faith statement during the application process or base any part of the admission decision on a student's gender or sexual orientation or religious beliefs or affiliations." be stricken.

Including this wording will have a significant impact on those families who rely on PSEO programs to help address the ever-rising cost of college. PSEO programs allow students to enter adulthood with much less college debt. Restricting PSEO programs impacts student's freedom to choose which post-secondary institution to attend, while at the same time incentivizing students away from faith-based colleges and universities. When faced with the choice of one's beliefs or finances, lower cost will inevitably win out. Students should be able to choose the school that is the best personal fit for them.

Furthermore, by forcing students away from faith-based colleges, the competition for PSEO spots at secular universities will increase. Considering that 25% of PSEO students attend PSEO at a faith-based institution, excluding these faith-based schools will limit choices available to *all* students. The same number of students competing for fewer openings does not help anyone. These programs provide instruction for the growing number of students taking advantage of the PSEO option. Restricting which schools can participate in PSEO limits the reach of the program.

It is a great thing for high school students to be able to earn college credit. It rewards hard work and encourages students to challenge themselves. It provides a lower-cost alternative to earning college credits, which benefits those for whom the cost college is a barrier to entry. Allowing high school students to earn college credits *at the school of their choice* not only better prepares them for college, but it relieves schedule pressure and frees students to focus their studies. Students state-wide have many choices when it comes to picking a college. No one is obligated to attend a faith-based college for PSEO. Those that do chose a faith-based college should not be penalized.

In closing, it is my sincere hope that our state government can work for all citizens, regardless of beliefs or ideology. Please strike the proposed amendment restricting which schools can participate in PSEO.

Please include my letter as part of the written testimony for the hearing scheduled for Wednesday, March 8th.

Sincerely,
Michael Kimmel

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Kimmel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.