

Committee on Education Policy,

I am writing today as a life-long Minnesotan. I was born, raised, and educated in our great state. I have been employed in public schools; my kids have attended both public and private education; and I currently serve on the school board at my son's high school. It is an understatement to say that I am passionate about education. I am grateful for all of the opportunities our state has to offer, and I am devastated that one of those opportunities may no longer be allowed.

I would like to state my opposition to the amendment to SF-1311 and that you would strike the language on lines 19.8-19.11 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.

I want to live in a state that gives families the freedom to choose the post-secondary institution that is the best fit for them. 25% of PSEO students attend PSEO at faith-based institutions. These programs are providing needed classes for the growing number of students accessing the PSEO option. Forcing students away from faith-based colleges will increase competition for PSEO spots at secular universities and will limit the choices available to all students. It is also worth noting that students are entering adulthood with much less debt because of PSEO options. Lastly, students state-wide have many choices about what institutions from which to get their PSEO credits, so no one is obligated to attend a faith-based college for PSEO.

These are many of the reasons I strongly oppose the amendment to SF-1311. I am proud to be a Minnesotan; we have always been ahead of the curve on the quality of education we offer our families. Let's keep it that way by striking the amendment to SF-1311.

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