

March 6, 2023

Minnesota State Senate

Attention MN Senate Committee Administrative Assistants:
Dana Elling Shultz & Reagan Greene

Re: MN Senate SF 1311

Sent via eMail

Dear Ms. Elling Shulz & Greene:

I am writing with regard to SF 1311, which includes language that would prevent many faith-based colleges and universities in Minnesota from participating in PSEO. Further, it is my understanding that if the language of this bill is adopted in the final legislation, colleges and universities that require a faith statement or make admissions decisions described in the bill may not be able to offer PSEO programs. This could have a dramatic and extremely negative impact on our Minnesota community of faith-based universities and high schools.

Specifically, I want to state my opposition to the amendment to SF 1311 and ask that **they strike 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.

There are numerous compelling reasons to exclude this language from the bill including:

- We want to preserve for students the freedom to choose the post secondary institution that is the best fit for them irrespective of whether it is affiliated with a faith-based institution;
- 25% of MN students who utilize PSEO programs attend PSEO at faith-based institutions. As a result, this proposed language will be detrimental to 25% of the beneficiaries and negatively impact the overall size and health of the program and its policy objectives;
- These programs have grown in popularity and importance over time and 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;
- Students who have benefited from PSEO programs are entering adulthood with much less college debt because of this program; and
- 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.

Again, I would like to reiterate my opposition to SF 1311 as currently constructed and strongly urge the Senate to strike the language on lines 19.8 through 19.11 of the original version of SF-1311.

Best Regards,

Scott Tudor
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