

March 4, 2023

Minnesota State Senate Committee on Education Policy,

I am writing to OPPOSE an amendment in bill SF-1311 and ask that you 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 race, creed, ethnicity, disability, gender, or sexual orientation or religious beliefs or affiliations.

I request that this letter become part of the WRITTEN TESTIMONY in opposition to this amendment.

Two of my children have already benefitted greatly from participating in the Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program. I also have a daughter who is in 10th grade this year who is planning to enroll in PSEO at a faith-based institution next year. She already knows that she would like to attend that institution after she graduates, and she is looking forward to getting an early start on completing her college education. Being able to attend PSEO courses at this institution will provide her with the opportunity to significantly reduce the cost of completing her degree and will hopefully allow her to avoid taking on significant student loan debt.

Currently, 25% of PSEO students attend PSEO at faith-based institutions. The University of Minnesota website indicates that they receive 1,600 applicants per year for their PSEO program and that they accept only 45% of those applicants. If the language above is added and faith-based institutions are no longer able to offer PSEO courses, it will significantly increase the competition for already limited spots in secular PSEO programs and will decrease the educational choices that are available to all Minnesota students. This will also lead to students taking on significantly more student loan debt, as fewer students will be able to attend PSEO courses.

Please do not limit the PSEO options available to Minnesota students. More PSEO choices allow for more options for more Minnesota students. In addition, having more available PSEO options will ultimately help to reduce the amount of student loan debt that Minnesota students will incur.

I am OPPOSED to the amendment in bill SF-1311 and ask that you strike the language on lines 19.8 through 19.11 of the original version of SF-1311.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark E. Loe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mark Loe
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Excelsior, MN 55331