

To Senators Elling and Greene; House Representatives Lee, Colburn, and Khan;  
Minnesota Governor Walz; and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan.

**Concerning Senate Bill SF1311 and House Bill HF2291.**

Greetings to you all.

I write this letter in opposition to the amendment made to SF1311, and to HF2291. I am requesting that this letter become part of the Written Testimony for the hearing to take place Wednesday, March 8, 2023.

Please strike the language on lines 19.8 through 19.11 of the original version of SF1311.

Please strike the language on lines 18.13 through 18.16 of HF2291.

PSEO education has been incredibly impactful in my own life, as well as the life of my family members. I have also seen it do wonders for my friends and their families, as well as many families within my sphere of influence.

My accessibility to Minnesota's exemplary PSEO education programs, in all their prestige and affordability, allowed me to pursue the higher education experience that I

desired and needed for my life. PSEO allowed me to expand my learning beyond the confines of my high school classroom to the farther reaches of higher education. I was able to jumpstart my studies of and career in accounting from my high school lobby. I was free to pursue my passions for learning about history and the art of writing, both prose and poetry, thanks to my access to an amplified learning environment via MN PSEO programs. The credits I accrued from my PSEO classes, taken through private religious instructions, allowed me to pursue an accelerated academic track in college. That accelerated track pushed my graduation date one year earlier, allowed me to secure several advantageous positions in prestigious accounting internships before I even turned 20 years old, and has set me up for a career of loyal, integrous accounting service to the people and businesses of Minnesota. My amplified learning in the fields of history and writing, accessible via PSEO, would have otherwise been entirely unavailable to me in college.

It is imperative that the Senate and the House reconsider their positions. Students are entitled to receive excellent education, and for many years the State of Minnesota has set the example for excellent education. The wide availability and affordability of PSEO programs has allowed numerous students to kickstart their careers and passions, setting them up for successes unheard of in other parts of the country. By offering PSEO courses, Minnesota has posited themselves as the perfect example not just to the United States, but to the entire world, of the boundless opportunity of education.

The new position proposed in the Senate and the House compromises the state's reputation and the educational opportunities of every single student within the State of Minnesota. 25% of PSEO students attend PSEO at faith-based institutions, many of which offer flexible credits applicable to a variety of higher institutions. Removing these institutions from the pool of PSEO providers is antithetical to everything that Minnesota stands for when it comes to equal educational opportunity for all, and a prestigious reputation of academic excellence. Additionally, the removal of these institutions from the pool will worsen the national student debt, as PSEO credits significantly alleviate the financial burden of higher education for many Minnesotans. The State of Minnesota dare not to catalyze the greatest debt meltdown in history, yet the proposed legislation may just tip the balance away from debt stability into utter chaos.

It is egregiously unjust to deny these educational opportunities to the students of Minnesota. Removing faith-based institutions from PSEO eligibility denies each and every student the opportunity to have a say in their academic career. Should the proposed legislation be passed, the 25% of PSEO students will be entirely displaced from their educational opportunity, not only due to a lack of choice but the restriction of demand. Furthermore, the number of PSEO-pursuant students is only increasing, year after year. The remaining eligible institutions will not be able to handle the influx of demand, and many Minnesotan students will be left on the path of an average education. I will reiterate; for a very long time, Minnesota has stood as the example of what it means to have accessibility to an exemplary education. Removing faith-based institutions from the eligible pool removes 25% of PSEO-pursuant students from the

opportunity to excellent education and is in direct opposition to everything that Minnesota and the Land of the Free has stood for.


In conclusion, I am in strong opposition to the proposed legislation. Senators, Representatives, Governor, and Lieutenant Governor; I ask that you strike the language on lines 19.8 through 19.11 of the original version of SF1311, and strike the language on lines 18.13 through 18.16 of HF2291. If you cut down access to PSEO education from faith-based institutions, you disenfranchise an entire generation of Minnesotan students from accessing the educational opportunities that they deserve, that Minnesota has promised to them. You dishonor their futures, and you poison the hearts of the next wave of workers, activists, and families.

Sincerely,

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