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(651) 554-5633**

March 21, 2024

Senator Ann Rest, Chair
Senate Taxes Committee
328 Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for SF 3223 – Shakopee Area Workforce Development Scholarships Pilot

Dear Chair Rest,

On behalf of Dakota-Scott Workforce Development Board, we want to thank you for the opportunity to express our support for SF 3223 to create a Shakopee Area Workforce Development Scholarships Pilot for Scott County.

This pilot program will help in bridging the skills gap in Scott County while addressing the needs of our local job market. In addition, through the Shakopee Area Chamber of Commerce and Shakopee Chamber Foundation's continued efforts to help the underserved populations in our community, this program will help alleviate barriers, including financial burdens associated with post-secondary education costs, while also securing current and future career pathways for individuals to succeed.

The Shakopee Area Chamber of Commerce and Shakopee Chamber Foundation are also working with area post-secondary institutions to bring tailored training programs into Scott County to help eliminate transportation costs for underserved individuals due to there not being a post-secondary institution located directly within Scott County. This program will only help to allow these efforts to grow and succeed.

The Shakopee Area Chamber of Commerce and Shakopee Chamber Foundation, through its community partnerships with organizations such as ours, will allow this program, if appropriated, to have a profound and positive impact on both our underserved communities, local workforce, and businesses throughout Scott County, and can become a model for other communities in the State of Minnesota to model their initiatives after.

We strongly urge your support for S.F. 3223 and appreciate the opportunity.

Sincerely,

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Mike Forbord, Chair
Dakota-Scott Workforce Development Board