

Elizabeth Proepper

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Dear Senators,

I am writing as a concerned constituent and an educator to urge you to oppose the Senate Delete All Amendment to SF2255, which would eliminate all funding for the STARBASE STEM program in our state.

As a teacher, I have brought my classes to STARBASE for the past four school years. Year after year, I've witnessed firsthand the tremendous impact this program has on students. Not only do they leave STARBASE more excited and engaged in STEM, but they also show a stronger understanding of math and science concepts and, most importantly, how those skills apply in real-world situations.

STARBASE has been a vital resource, reaching 438 schools and more than 35,000 students across the state annually. The proposed cut would remove its entire \$500,000 annual budget—a relatively small investment with a massive return in educational value and workforce readiness.

Most of this funding supports the development and distribution of STEM kits that empower teachers and engage students in hands-on learning. Without this support, those kits would no longer be available, and onsite programming would be scaled back, limiting access to high-impact learning experiences, especially for schools that lack STEM resources.

Eliminating funding for STARBASE would be a step backward for STEM education and for the future of our students. It would mean fewer opportunities for young minds to discover their potential in science, technology, engineering, and math—areas that are increasingly vital in today's world.

I respectfully urge you to advocate for the restoration of STARBASE funding in SF2255. Supporting this program means investing in our students, our schools, and our state's future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Proepper