



February 2, 2025

Senator Rest, Chair, Senate Taxes Committee
Senator Weber, Chair, Senate Taxes Committee
Members of Senate Taxes Committee

RE: SF 501 (Dornink) - Support

Chair & Members,

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs run the gamut of cosmetology to public safety to culinary to construction to medical careers to agriculture to early childhood to manufacturing to creative design to business to human services to automotive and far beyond. In short, nearly everything you depended on to get to work today in some way, shape, or form somehow originated in a secondary CTE program. Ultimately not only do our CTE programs fill the needs of our workforce and keep our economy strong, but they are also the programs that keep many of our students in school. They are the programs that many of our students find belonging and relevance. Many secondary CTE students leave high school with industry recognized credentials and actual work-based learning experiences. CTE programs have incredible teachers that have strong industry connections and oftentimes bring industry expertise and relevance to students. CTE programs fulfill the needs of some of the most brilliant students in our schools, sometimes students who struggle to find success and relevance in any other place.

Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) are student-led organizations in middle schools, high schools, and post-secondary institutions that are focused on specific career and technical education (CTE) areas. These organizations provide students within school, and often, outside of the school day, opportunities to develop leadership skills, explore career pathways, and apply academic and technical skills in real-world settings. CTOS offer a range of activities such as competitions, community service projects, leadership development events, and industry partnerships. Each CTOS is aligned with a specific career cluster or industry sector, such as health sciences, business, technology, agriculture, or skilled trades. Recognized CTOS in Minnesota include FFA, BPA, DECA, SkillsUSA, FCCLA, and HOSA.

We are all likely to understand and support the significance of accessing programs and facilities beyond the regular school hours. These opportunities are often crucial for students to gain hands-on experience and practical skills that can prepare them for their future careers. However, it can be challenging when these activities require families to incur personal costs, such as transportation expenses. Additionally, participation in Student Organizations can also incur personal costs, such as membership fees or travel expenses for competitions or conferences. It's important for schools and policymakers to recognize these financial burdens on students and their families and work towards providing more support and resources to ensure that all students have equal access to these valuable opportunities.

Your support in providing the ability to include education related expenses related to CTE programs as an eligible income tax credit is helpful to parents and families and is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sarah Shanley
President
Minnesota Association for Career & Technical Administrators

Holly Strand-Rysgaard
President
Minnesota Association for Career & Technical Education

