

3/20/2023

Dear Education Finance Committee Chair Youakim and Members of the Committee,

I want this letter to become part of the written testimony opposing the amendment to HF-1269.

I am writing this letter to state my opposition to the amendment to HF-1269 in the House and ask that they strike the language on lines 19.8 through 19.11 of the original version of HF-1269 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.

My oldest daughter plans to take PSEO classes at Crown College this fall. She is an amazing, bright, driven young lady who is ready to further her education. She is beyond excited to take in-person classes at Crown. It is conveniently located near our home in Waconia, which makes this option even more incredible for us! PSEO is a huge blessing to many students, but to have a campus so close to our home so that our daughter can experience in-person classes so easily is very exciting! She is thrilled about this next phase of her education and is more than ready to have face-to-face class time with professors and other students her age.

Minnesota has always offered wonderful school choice freedom, so I ask that you do not take this away from my daughters and from many other students who plan to take advantage of this incredible program. Taking away the choice for students to decide on what institution best suits them is not what Minnesota education is about!

Already about 25% of PSEO students attend PSEO at faith-based institutions. Where will they go? Moving them to online PSEO options takes away important face-to-face classroom time, puts an administrative burden on state colleges, and limits the number of students who can take advantage of PSEO since most colleges have a limit as to how many they can accept.

Furthermore, the law already only lets these schools receive funding for "non-sectarian" courses. These PSEO students are only taking general education classes that are not religious classes. Also, students state-wide have many choices about what institutions from which to get their PSEO credits, so no one is obligated to attend a faith-based college for PSEO. By allowing the amendment, you will simply be taking educational choices away from MN students! PSEO is an incredible way for students to save money and get a college degree without going into extreme debt as they enter adulthood. Please do not limit options for MN students to be able to take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

Again, I strongly oppose the amendment to HF-1269.

Thank you for your consideration,

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