



March 8, 2021

Chair Richardson
463 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF874 Constitutional Amendment

Dear Chair Richardson and members of the Committee,

All Minnesota students deserve to have a rigorous and relevant education that prepares them for success in college, career, and life. The state constitution should be the beacon ensuring every child has access to a quality education, but it currently falls flat by setting a low bar.

The current constitutional language only requires that Minnesota provide an education that is general, efficient, uniform, and funded by the Legislature. This vague guardrail for the quality of our public education system is insufficient and outdated. In 1993, in *Skeen v. State*, the Minnesota Supreme Court concluded that the constitution's "general and uniform" language requires the state to meet the basic educational needs of all students. The Court also held that the constitution requires the state to provide enough funds to ensure that each student receives an adequate education.

The Page Amendment demands a stronger commitment to the education of our students, who are the lynchpin of our state's future. Minnesota's constitution was drafted over 160 years ago when basic access was critical; today our state should set a higher bar to ensure all Minnesotans can meaningfully participate in our workforce, democracy, and communities. To ensure Minnesota students are ready for college and career in an increasingly competitive and global workplace, we need to guarantee not just access but quality. The failure to make this commitment is leaving too many students behind, with no remedy or recourse.

We appreciate that the committee is hearing this important bill today, and encourage you to partner with the community leaders, parents, and legal experts you have heard from today to advance an amendment to Minnesota voters that renews our state's commitment to students, and to a world-class K-12 education system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JC" or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Josh Crosson
Executive Director