



May 16, 2024

Chair Pelowski
Vice Chair Wolgamott
Representative McDonald

Chair Fateh
Vice Chair Putnam
Senator Duckworth

Dear Chair Pelowski, Chair Fateh, and Members of the Conference Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the conference report on HF4024, the higher education policy omnibus bill, and in particular Section 10 related to restrictions on Minnesota public universities' procurement of support from online program management companies (OPMs).

Academic Partnerships is a trusted, expert partner of many Minnesota institutions, assisting them in making their affordable, high-value, workforce-aligned programs available to students online. As the landscape of higher education continues to evolve with the needs of students, employers, and our economy, online programs are a significant and growing part of that landscape. Currently, nearly a third of Minnesota students are enrolled in exclusively online programs, and trend lines indicate that exclusively online enrollments are only expected to increase.

We appreciate that Section 10 has been amended to provide some temporary flexibility for select institutions to continue to be able to afford the services and support they require to successfully serve these students. While this amendment represents an improvement over prior versions of this legislation, we hope to continue a broader discussion about steps Minnesota should take to ensure that all public institutions of higher education have access to the resources, tools, and expertise they need to remain competitive and to meet Minnesota students where so many of them are—online.

Minnesota's long-term success relies on a skilled workforce with upward mobility powering thriving regional economies throughout the State. Minnesota public institutions are essential to the advancement of that vision, and Academic Partnerships is proud to assist them.

We hope that Academic Partnerships can continue to be a resource to you and your colleagues as you consider how Minnesota law might shape the future of the online program options available to Minnesotans. This is an important and complex topic, and we believe it is important to take the time to get it right.

Sincerely,

Adam Arguelles
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
Academic Partnerships