

March 28, 2023

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

Please include this as **WRITTEN TESTIMONY** in opposition to lines 69.28-70.3 in H 2497 DE1.

I am writing to you as a homeschool mom of 3 – one of whom has already applied for PSEO. I was at the House mtg (HF 1269) on February 6 and the Senate mtg (SF 1311) on February 15. On March 8, I went to both the Senate mtg (SF 1311) and the House mtg (HF 1269). I was at the House mtg (HF 1269) on March 21. And I plan to be at tomorrow's mtg for the DE1 Amendment for HF 2497.

We have been homeschooling for 9+ years. For 7 years prior to that, my children were in a parochial school. We have been paying taxes into the public school system without using those dollars; that is a sacrifice we knew about going in. However, I don't think we should also have to pay for PSEO if we choose to take classes at a college with a faith statement. PSEO has been a huge benefit to all MN high schoolers to get a jump start on their higher education. PSEO classes have been in our family's education plan and transcripts for quite some time and would start in Fall 2023.

My son's top choices of colleges for PSEO are faith-based institutions. It is very important to him to be in a Christian environment. However, for now, he would only be taking General Education classes to complete his high school graduation requirements and to give him a jump start on his college career. Those classes include American Government, Calculus, and Writing and Research. He would also be interested in trying different classes to determine if he is on the right path before choosing a 4-yr college and without accumulating unnecessary debt. That includes classes like Career Exploration and Planning, as well as classes to learn specific technical skills. We understand that MN government does not cover religious classes. Denying PSEO funding for these institutions would be detrimental.

Statistically, PSEO students in faith-based institutions make up over 25% of the total PSEO student population in MN. If the colleges with faith statements lose their funding and are no longer able to offer PSEO, where will the students go? It is my understanding that all colleges have a limited number of spots for their PSEO programs. That could mean that many high school students – public, private, and homeschool – will not be able to take on-campus PSEO classes, regardless of what type of college they choose.

I **oppose** this new PSEO language. Please strike lines 69.28-70.3 in H 2497 DE1.

Respectfully,

Sarah Bokenewicz

Mayer, MN