

Chair Pelowski and Members of the Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for your time today and your work in Higher Education for our great state of Minnesota.

I would like to speak in favor of including HF1575 into the omnibus bill (authored by Vice Chair Wolgamott and co-authored by several members of the committee). We greatly appreciate your support for MICC and working on behalf of students with autism and learning differences that need a different educational pathway to success.

You have handouts before you highlighting the work we do at MICC and our incredible success rates. Everyday, we transform the lives of our students and their trajectory. These incredible young adults have great potential and we use our person centered model to give each student the programming and services that work best for their learning and abilities.

The current omnibus funds some great initiatives for Higher Education in Minnesota and our institutions, but we need to keep in mind that the other MN Institutions across MN are not an option for the students who attend MICC. As the number of young adults with autism and learning disabilities rapidly increases (138% increase in MN Public Schools since 2009), now is a critical time to expand MICC's programming to serve more individuals and to keep our programming affordable for Minnesota Family's at all income levels.

Please support adding additional funding to MICC and be a voice for young adults that require a different educational pathway to success.

Thank you for your time.

Amy Gudmestad
Executive Director, MICC