

February 16, 2023

Dear House Higher Education Committee Members:

On behalf of our 18 member institutions, the Minnesota Private College Council (Council) strongly supports HF 381, the 2023 Increase Teachers of Color Act in Higher Education. We appreciate Representative Kozlowski chief-authoring this important legislation.

As a member of the Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers, the Council supports proposals to narrow opportunity gaps to recruit, prepare, and support teachers of color. HF 381 provides scholarships and student teacher grants to support future classroom teachers that more closely reflect the diversity of K-12 students across Minnesota.

Fifteen of the Council's 18 member institutions have teacher preparation programs with all 15 awarding bachelor's degrees in education and 10 awarding master's degrees. Since the 1990's, our member institutions have demonstrated their commitment to diversifying the teacher workforce and that work continues today. During the 2020-2021 academic year, 20 percent of students graduating with a bachelor's degree in education from our colleges were students of color and indigenous students. And, 46 percent of students graduating with a master's degree in education were students of color and indigenous students.

We all need to do more to increase the number of students of color and Native American students who pursue a career of service as educators. This legislation will help increase the racial diversity of teachers coming out of our higher education institutions by making their pathway to a teaching degree more affordable.

We are pleased to endorse this legislation and ask you to support the Increase Teachers of Color Act in Higher Education.

Sincerely,



Paul Cerkenik
President