

Dear Members of the House Taxes Committee,

We, the undersigned businesses in Clay County, Minnesota, respectfully urge you to support House File 4198 authored by Representative Paul Marquart, a workforce aid bill that brings our high schools, two and four-year colleges, businesses, non-profits, and elected local officials together in creating and implementing one unified strategy and plan to address our critical workforce needs. This much-needed funding will prepare learners for high-skill jobs of the future and address the state's workforce shortage.

As business leaders, we can attest to workforce challenges being one of the top hindrances to our region's growth and prosperity. According to a 2021 Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Study, job openings during the second quarter of last year reached a record high of 205,714 job vacancies (8% vacancy rate), 41.9% of vacancies were located in Greater Minnesota. Through the collaboration of public and private dollars, Community Career Workforce Academies are long-term and sustainable workforce solutions that foster robust learning environments, promote career exploration, produce choice-ready graduates, and establish a pipeline of qualified workers for our local economies. Counties that employ this creative solution will expose their students to a rigorous 21st-century education that provides an opportunity to earn a postsecondary credential or degree, fast-tracking them into high-wage, high-demand jobs or continued education.

The state of Minnesota must continue to invest in creative workforce solutions in order to overcome these widespread workforce challenges. The Moorhead Career Workforce Academy in Clay County is an extraordinary example of an innovative Community Career Workforce Academy that exists in the state of Minnesota. With the financial support outlined in this bill, new and existing academies can expand access to new and current Minnesota residents to ensure a strong pipeline of future talent and immediate development of the current underskilled workforce.

Thank you for your service to the great state of Minnesota, and your attention to this crucial workforce issue. Accordingly, we respectfully urge you to vote YES on HF 4198.

Sincerely,

**Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of  
Commerce**  
*Shannon Full, President and CEO*

**D-S Beverages**  
*Doug Restemayer, President*

**Advanced Engineering and Environmental  
Services, Inc.**  
*Eric Dodds, Operations Manager*

**Downtown Moorhead Inc.**  
*Derrick LaPoint, President and CEO*

**American Crystal Sugar**  
*Tom Astrup, President and CEO*

**Eventide Senior Living Communities**  
*Jon Riewer, President and CEO*

**ASN Constructors**  
*Greg Yavicoli, Construction Manager*

**First International Bank and Trust**  
*S. Peter Stenehjem, President*

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota**  
*Pam Gulleason, VP of Public Affairs & Government Relations*

**Gooseberry Park Players**  
*Sara Solhjem, Board President*

**Bremer Bank**  
*Judd Graham, Senior Region President*

**Home Builders Association of Fargo Moorhead**  
*Bryce Johnson, CEO*

**ByteSpeed**  
*Anna Hanson, Sale Director*

**Hornbacher's**  
*Matt Leiseth, President*

**City of Moorhead**  
*Dan Mahli, City Manager*

**Matt's Automotive**  
*Matt Lachowitzer, Owner and Founder*

**Clay County Commissioner**  
*Jenna Kahly, District 1*

**Microsoft**  
*Taya Spelhaug, TechSpark Manager*

**Clay County Commissioner**  
*Frank Gross, District 2*

**Minnesota State Community and Technical College**  
*Dr. Carrie Brimhall, President*

**Clay County Commissioner**  
*Jenny Mongeau, District 3*

**Moore Holding Company**  
*Shane N. Waslaski, CEO*

**Clay County Commissioner**  
*Kevin Campbell, District 4*

**Moorhead Business Association**  
*Sheri Larson, Executive Director*

**Clay County Commissioner**  
*David Ebinger, District 5*

**Moorhead Legacy Education Foundation**  
*Janelle Leiseth, Board Member*

**Concordia College**  
*William Craft, President*

**Red River Valley Alliance**  
*Esther Madrigal Diez, CEO*

**Construction Engineers**

*James Hand, Business Development*

**Sanford Health**

*Molly Carmody, Senior Legislative Affairs  
Specialist*

**SCHEELS**

*Steve D. Scheels, President*