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March 9, 2021

To: House Industrial Education and Economic Development Finance  
and Policy Committee

From: Minnesota Asphalt Pavement Association

The Minnesota Asphalt Pavement Association (MAPA) is a trade association representing the asphalt pavement industry since 1942. We are writing to support the passage of HF1337 (Lislegard), Career pathway grant program created, online learning through authorized through contracts with qualifying supplemental online learning providers, and money appropriated.

Not surprisingly, whenever we survey our membership about operational challenges, the #1 issue is finding workforce.

MAPA is in the process of creating a partnership with the MN Virtual Academy and Local 49er online learning program. It is crucial to begin exposing young people to opportunities in the trades during their high school and even junior high years. College isn't for everyone, as we all know, yet so many high schools emphasize college acceptance over finding the right fit for each student. They don't prioritize this learning, especially in the metro area, and that is why extra support is needed.

This bill will not only help remove barriers with school districts from promoting the MN Virtual Academy Career Pathway program, but also encourage them to provide the additional crucial step of academic support and counseling to help students find the right path for them.

We are especially encouraged by the high level of female participation in this online program, as an underrepresented group in our industry.

For these reasons we support this bill, and would like to thank Representative Lislegard for his advocacy.

Sincerely,

Abigail Bryduck  
MAPA Executive Director