

**Nancy Bjorkman
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Re: HF2497

March 29, 2023

Dear Minnesota Legislators,

I am writing with great concern over the proposed bills that would eliminate PSEO options from faith based colleges in our state.

Minnesota's PSEO program is the only one of its kind in our area of the country. It serves such a great purpose allowing qualified students to access college classes and career training during high school in order to move forward into adulthood when they are ready and with little or no debt. SO many people in our current society are drowning in college debt, and this program is a great opportunity for students to get and stay ahead. This is a wise use of school funding dollars in our state.

My four children were able to utilize PSEO to get ahead before entering college. My son graduated high school with 55 college credits. What a bonus! I work with many high school students in my job and counsel many of them to explore what this option could do for them.

Currently in Minnesota over 2,000 students access PSEO through colleges that have a faith base. These colleges and universities are doing a stellar job of providing quality classes in a wide variety of areas allowing students to truly find their unique path into their futures. It is a matter of CHOICE for these students. They deserve a choice as much as any protected group in our society.

The law already limits what classes can be funded by PSEO to "non-sectarian" courses. For decades, this has always satisfied the "separation" that government desires.

We need to keep this amazing program strong, viable, and accessible to all students which it is doing well as it stands. With limited numbers of spaces available at many colleges, eliminating the colleges that serve 25% of PSEO students makes NO SENSE. It seems to be an answer looking for a problem.

I urge you to eliminate this wording in HF2497.

Sincerely,
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