



March 18, 2024

Chair Pelowski and Members of the House Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee,

A few weeks ago, students from every corner of the state came together to decide what critical issues we should advocate for as community college students. Accessibility and transparency of accommodations for students in post-secondary education were among the top items on this list.

In the 2019-20 academic year, the following groups reported having a disability:

- 21% of all enrolled undergraduates and 11% of all enrolled graduate students;
- 28% of undergraduate student veterans and 20% of graduate student veterans;
- 24% of Native American, 23% of Pacific Islander, 21% of White, 22% of Hispanic, 18% of Black, and 14% of Asian undergraduates

However, there is a discrepancy between the rate of students reporting having a disability, and the rate of students registering with their campus disability center, as in 2019-20, on average, 8% of students registered as having a disability with their institution.

HF4565, The Minnesota Respond, Innovate, Succeed and Empower (RISE) Act, is modeled after legislation passed in several states and introduced in Congress. Its goal is to improve the accessibility and transparency of accommodations for students with disabilities in postsecondary education.

Therefore, LeadMN, the statewide student association representing Minnesota's 100,000+ community and technical college students, is pleased to support HF4565.

Sincerely,

John Runnigen
President
LeadMN – College Students Connecting for Change