



February 15, 2023

Senate Workforce Development Committee

On behalf of the Associated Builders and Contractors MN/ND Chapter and our 330 construction industry members who help build North Dakota's commercial, industrial, and energy projects, we ask the committee to support SB 2170, which will conform state law to federal youth employment laws related to minors working in construction and a permit to do so is signed by a parent or guardian.

A career in construction is one that is rewarding, pays well, and can provide family-supporting wages and benefits to those willing to work.

Our contractor members throughout North Dakota in all areas of construction are always looking for the next generation of craft professionals to hire, train, and retain. Allowing this age group of young adults to explore careers in construction while still in high school is very important for our industry. U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division rules currently allow 16- and 17-year-olds to work on construction projects in a number of different trades. There are, for good reason, several hazardous occupations that federal rules prohibit anyone under 18 years old from working in. These hazardous occupations include operating heavy equipment and motor vehicles, roofing, power tools and saws, excavation work, and more.

For those 16 and 17-year-old North Dakotans who have sought out careers in construction in the past but have been told to wait until they turn 18, SB 2170 opens the door for them to gain hands-on experience working in the construction industry and to do so safely within existing federal law.

Associated Builders and Contractors MN/ND recommends a **Do Pass** on Senate Bill 2170.

Regards,

Dale Larson

Dale Larson
ND Regional Director
Associated Builders and Contractors MN/ND