



September 15, 2020

Senator Wayne Schmidt
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536
SenWSchmidt@senate.michigan.gov

Dear Senator Schmidt;

On behalf of the Northwest Michigan Community Development Coalition, we are reaching out to urge your support for the Grand Traverse County Housing Ready Program in the FY 2021 budget.

We represent a group of nonprofit, public, private and philanthropic organizations from the five-county area around Traverse City. We work together to solve large regional challenges, such as our crippling lack of housing options.

We request your support for an appropriation of \$300,000 over three years to establish a Housing Ready Program in Grand Traverse County that will address the county's housing crisis and promote economic activity during COVID-19 recovery.

Housing is a clear and urgent economic development need in Grand Traverse County. In light of our regional economic challenges that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, housing options are even more important than ever before. We need to attract and retain a workforce, and those individuals and families will need appropriate housing to be safe, and to protect public health. Creating housing options also brings new jobs and investment, restarting our local economies.

Our rural community needs resources to assist with the scope and scale of necessary housing development. Developers consistently look for communities to offer support in navigating the process, convening partners, and facilitating the use of local, state, and federal incentives and tools. Yet, it's difficult for rural areas, like ours, to provide full-time staff for these and other functions.

By supporting this appropriation and the Housing Ready model, you will be helping the district you serve to jump start this much-needed collaborative program, spur economic development, and most importantly, to provide housing options for all.

Thank you for considering our request and for all that you do for Northern Michigan!

Sincerely,

The Northwest Michigan Community Development Coalition

David Mengebier, President and CEO of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation

Leah McCallum, Chair, Traverse City Downtown Development Authority

Warren Call, President and CEO, Traverse Connect

Yarrow Brown, Executive Director, Housing North

Matt McCauley, CEO, Networks Northwest

Dr. Nick Ceglarek, Superintendent, TBAISD

Jessica Sullivan, Chair, Grand Traverse County EDC & VP Strategic Ventures and Shareholder Relations, Hagerty

Becky Ewing, Executive Director, Rotary Charities

Nate Alger, Administrator, Grand Traverse County

Liz Kirkwood, Executive Director, FLOW

Martin A. Colburn, City Manager, City of Traverse City

Kelly Dunham, Executive Director, Bay Area Transportation Authority

Sakura Takano, Director of Community Assets and Impact Investing, Rotary Charities

Christi Nowak, Director Community Health, Munson Healthcare

Marguerite Cotto, VP for Lifelong and Professional Learning, NMC

Matt McDonough, Executive Director, Discovery Center and Pier

Jean Derenzy, CEO, Downtown Development Authority

Jane Sundmacher, Executive Director, Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region

Emily Llore, Community Health Coordinator, Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Tina Schuett, Owner, Rarebird Brewing

Alison Metiva, VP Strategic Engagements & Programs, Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation

Wendy Hirchenberger, Health Officer, Grand Traverse County Health Department



November 10, 2020

The Honorable Curt VanderWall
35th District State Senator
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

The Honorable Jim Stamas
36th District State Senator
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

The Honorable Wayne Schmidt
37th District State Senator
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

The Honorable Jack O'Malley
101st District State Representative
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

The Honorable Michelle Hoitenga
102nd District State Representative
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

The Honorable Daire Rendon
103rd District State Representative
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

The Honorable Triston Cole
105th District State Representative
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

The Honorable Sue Allor
106th District State Representative
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

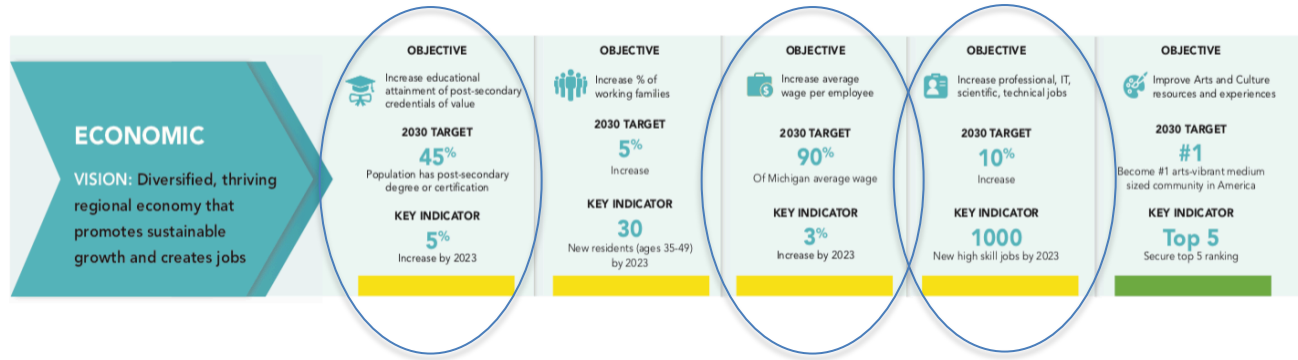
The Honorable Lee Chatfield
Speaker of the House
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Senators VanderWall, Stamas and Schmidt; Representatives O'Malley, Hoitenga, Rendon, Cole, Allor; and Speaker Chatfield:

We the undersigned contributors of the Community Development Coalition of Northwest Michigan, are writing in strong support of Senate Bill 1055, which would allow community colleges to offer a bachelor of science degree in nursing (BSN).

As you may know, the Community Development Coalition of Northwest Michigan was formed in 2019 to tap into the power of working together to achieve transformational change. The coalition is made up of an alliance of 30+ nonprofit, business, governmental, and philanthropic partners. Together, the Coalition has identified and committed to a set of shared priorities, being reported on a regional scorecard, that are focused on five economic, four societal, and three environmental objectives.

This legislation supports several of the Coalition’s economic scorecard objectives:



Specifically, allowing community colleges to offer a bachelors degree in nursing would directly support the Coalition’s target of 45% of the population having a post-secondary degree or certification attainment by 2030.

In addition, with Munson Healthcare facing a need to hire more nurses and requiring that as a condition of employment, all nurses either have or obtain a BSN within five years of employment, **this legislation aligns and supports the Coalition’s goal of increasing professional, IT, scientific and technical jobs in the region.** In addition, this legislation supports increasing the average wage in northwest lower Michigan, which is currently at 70% of the Michigan average.

As a region, we have an opportunity with Senate Bill 1055 to ensure that we maintain and grow our nursing talent pipeline. Senate Bill 1055 offers an affordable and accessible pathway for those entering the workforce for the first time as well as our existing workforce to find successful careers in the healthcare industry. The legislation moves us closer to the goal of 80% of all nurses having a BSN (set by the National Academy of Sciences) and ultimately increasing positive patient outcomes as a result.

Thank you for your consideration of support of Senate Bill 1055. For more information on the Community Development Coalition of Northwest Michigan and to find our scorecard, please visit www.nwmicommunitydevelopment.org or call David Mengebier, President and CEO of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation at 231-534-5095.

Sincerely,

- Dave Mengebier, President and CEO, Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation
- Jean Derenzy, CEO, Traverse City Downtown Development Authority
- Jessica Sullivan, Board Chair, Grand Traverse Economic Development Corporation and V.P. of Strategic Ventures & Shareholder Relations, Hagerty
- Nate Alger, Administrator, Grand Traverse County
- Emily Modrall, Chief of Staff, Boomerang Catapult
- Christi Nowak, System Manager – Community Health, Munson Healthcare
- Marguerite Cotto, VP for Lifelong and Professional Learning, NMC
- Leah McCallum, Principal, Blue Orange Consulting
- Dr. Nick Ceglarek, Superintendent, TBAISD
- Warren Call, President and CEO, Traverse Connect
- Matt McCauley, CEO, Networks Northwest
- Matt McDonough, Executive Director, Discovery Center and Pier