

Testimony of Support
Senate Bill No. 2331
February 1, 2011

Good morning Chairman Cook and members of the Finance and Tax Committee. My name is Leon Dietrich; I live in district 35. I am in support of Senate Bill No. 2331. This bill would give a good incentive to employers to hire people with disabilities.

I have been working with the Bismarck Public Schools for 24 years. I started working in a classroom with kids that have disabilities. Then after eight years I was burned out on that job and applied for a custodian position with the same school. I worked part-time in this job for 14 years. In the summer of 2008 a full time custodian position opened up and I was hired on the spot. I was thankful that the principal, the head custodian and the safety director had confidence in me and hired me full time. Now I work more hours and make a little more money. I never had benefits before and now I do. Having benefits helps people be more self-sufficient and they can go to the doctor when they need to. Now that I have full time job I feel more secure and better about myself. I never worry about money anymore and I am very happy.

People with disabilities are hard workers and reliable and they deserve to have a chance to be productive and have a job. I think if this bill passes it will provide more job opportunities for people with disabilities. That way self-advocates who get jobs could feel good about themselves, just like I do. When people with disabilities get jobs they feel good and can be a part of our community.

In closing, I urge you to support Senate Bill 2331. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Leon Dietrich