

BUILDING A STRONG
WORKFORCE

THE DULUTH PROMISE



What is The Duluth Promise?

The Duluth Promise is a coalition of educational institutions and workforce partners committed to building a strong local workforce. We focus on creating clear pathways to employment in high-demand fields. Bills will be introduced soon both in the House and Senate.

Our team is dedicated to fostering community growth.

Who is involved?

Duluth
Public Schools



DULUTH
AREA CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE



Students are the architects of tomorrow; investing in their education today is building a brighter future for all.



The Challenge



Shrinking Workforce

Duluth's labor force is decreasing, impacting the ability of businesses to find skilled workers.



Skills Gap

There is a disconnect between the skills taught in educational institutions and those required by employers.



Retention Issues

Graduates often leave the area, leading to a loss of talent and economic potential.



Our Solution

Duluth Promise offers a comprehensive approach to workforce development by aligning educational pathways with industry needs. Our coalition ensures students receive relevant training and support to succeed in high-demand fields. We focus on healthcare, manufacturing, and business services.

How It Works

1 Connect

Reach out to our team to discuss your workforce needs and explore potential partnerships.

2 Collaborate

Work with us to develop tailored educational pathways that align with industry demands and student goals.

3 Implement

Launch the customized programs and support students as they transition into the workforce.

Benefits



Strategic Partnerships

The Duluth Promise partnerships will link education and employers, creating clear career paths and equipping students with in-demand skills.



Stackable Credentials

Our program will offer stackable credentials, making education accessible, relevant, and supportive of lifelong learning and career advancement.



Community Engagement

The Duluth Promise will connect students with the community, encouraging them to stay and contribute to local economic growth.



Essentia Health

March 19, 2025

The Honorable Chair Dave Pinto
The Honorable Chair Dave Baker
House Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee

RE: Support for HF849 (Kozlowski/Johnson,P., Zeleznikar, Virnig) – Duluth Promise Initiative Funding

Dear Chair Pinto, Chair Baker and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Essentia Health, I am writing to express our strong support for HF849 and the funding it provides for the Duluth Promise Initiative. As one of the region's largest healthcare providers, we are deeply committed to developing a skilled and dedicated healthcare workforce to serve our communities. This initiative will create vital opportunities for students in Duluth to explore, train for, and build careers in the healthcare industry.

Essentia Health is eager to partner with Duluth Public Schools, Lake Superior College, the University of Minnesota-Duluth, and the College of St. Scholastica to develop career pathways in healthcare, ensuring students receive the education and hands-on training needed to enter in-demand professions such as nursing, medical technology, radiology, laboratory sciences, and patient care support.

This funding will support programs that:

- Expose students to healthcare careers early through job shadowing, internships, and mentorship opportunities at Essentia Health.
- Provide hands-on clinical training through partnerships with local colleges and technical programs.
- Create scholarship and workforce development initiatives to help students from all backgrounds pursue careers in healthcare.
- Address workforce shortages by ensuring that students are job-ready for critical roles in hospitals, clinics, and long-term care settings.

As a leading healthcare provider in the region, Essentia Health understands the urgency of building a strong healthcare workforce to meet the needs of our communities. By investing in education, career training, and workforce development, the Duluth Promise Initiative will provide a sustainable solution to the growing demand for healthcare professionals while offering young people the opportunity for stable, rewarding careers.

We strongly encourage you to support HF849 and help build the next generation of Minnesota's healthcare workforce. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Higgins
Vice President – Talent Management
P: 218-576-0329 | M: 952-270-3451
John.Higgins@EssentiaHealth.org

Essentia Health
www.essentiahealth.org

EssentiaHealth.org

We are called to make a healthy difference in people's lives.

Quality | Hospitality | Respect | Joy | Justice | Stewardship | Teamwork



March 19, 2025

Committee Administrator - DFL Caucus
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
Saint Paul Minnesota 55155

RE: HF849, Duluth Promise

Dear Mr. Reese:

On behalf of APEX, we support HF849, the Duluth Promise, a coalition of educational institutions and workforce partners committed to building a strong local workforce and fostering community growth.

APEX is a private sector-led ambassador and concierge responsible for promoting sustainable growth in Northeast Minnesota and Northwest Wisconsin. Our non-traditional and dynamic economic development organization focuses on efforts to elevate the region's brand, address challenges, share stories, and sustain economic vitality and growth through business attraction, connection and advocacy.

Our work is about building relationships and collaborative problem-solving around key issues experienced by the businesses in our region. APEX plays a key role as part of the Duluth Promise coalition, being a conduit between business and industry employers who desire a strong workforce and see the need for clear career pathways and supportive systems for success. We are seeing first-hand the shrinking workforce, skills gap and retention issues employers are facing. Having employers inform and align with pathway programs in K-12 schools, higher education and the Trades will help to address current workforce recruitment and retention challenges.

We look forward to doing the hard work with our partners, Duluth Public Schools, University of Minnesota Duluth, Lake Superior College, The College of St. Scholastica, City of Duluth and Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce to execute on the Duluth Promise and build strong career pathway programs. We believe this can be a model for the future in other communities in our region.

APEX and our nearly 100 Investor-Members from around the region are proud to be part of the Duluth Promise. Please reach out if you have any questions related to APEX's role in this coalition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rachel A. Johnson".

Rachel Johnson
APEX President & CEO
218.591.7244
rachel@apexgetsbusiness.com



March 19, 2025

Cirrus Aircraft
4515 Taylor Circle
Duluth, MN 55811
March 19, 2025

The Honorable Chair Dave Pinto
The Honorable Chair Dave Baker
House Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Letter of Support for HF849 (Kozlowski/Johnson,P., Zeleznikar, Virnig) – Duluth Promise Initiative Funding

Dear Chair Pinto, Chair Baker and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Cirrus Aircraft, I am writing to express our strong support for HF849, which provides critical funding for the Duluth Promise Initiative. As one of Duluth's largest employers and a leader in the aviation industry, Cirrus Aircraft is committed to developing a strong, local workforce and creating pathways for students to build successful careers in high-demand fields.

The Duluth Promise Initiative is a transformational investment in our local students, ensuring that young people in our community have access to the education, skills, and training needed to secure well-paying jobs right here in Duluth. Cirrus Aircraft is excited about the opportunity to partner with Duluth Public Schools, Lake Superior College, the University of Minnesota Duluth and the College of St. Scholastica to create clear career pathways in aviation, advanced manufacturing, engineering, and business.

This funding will help provide:

- Career-focused education and hands-on training for high school and college students, preparing them for technical and skilled trade careers in our industry.
- Internship and apprenticeship opportunities to expose students to real-world experiences in aerospace manufacturing, engineering, and operations.
- Industry partnerships that connect students with local employers like Cirrus Aircraft, ensuring Duluth's workforce remains competitive and well-equipped for the future.

At Cirrus Aircraft, we recognize that the success of our company is directly tied to the success of our community. By investing in education, workforce development, and career readiness, the Duluth Promise Initiative will help strengthen the local economy and provide long-term opportunities for students, families, and businesses alike.

We strongly urge you to support HF849 and invest in the future of Duluth's workforce. Thank you for your time and consideration.


Sincerely,


Dante E. Tomassoni

Dante Tomassoni
Director of Corporate Affairs
Cirrus Aircraft



Roger J. Reinert
Mayor

 218-730-5230

 rreinert@duluthmn.gov

Room 422
411 West First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

March 20, 2025

The Honorable Dave Pinto and Dave Baker
Co-Chairs, House Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee
Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Co-Chairs Pinto and Baker and Members of the House Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee:

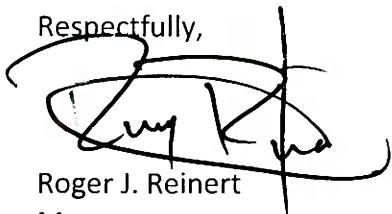
On behalf of city of Duluth, I offer our strong support for HF 849, which provides \$500,000 to the Duluth Public Schools for the Duluth Promise Initiative.

The Duluth Promise Initiative is a partnership between the Duluth Public School District, the University of Minnesota Duluth, the College of St. Scholastica, Lake Superior College, the Area Partnership for Economic Expansion (APEX), the Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Duluth, to strengthen career planning, career pathway training and education, wraparound support services, and job skills advancement in high-demand careers including health care, manufacturing, and business finance.

At a time when businesses face hiring challenges and workforce shortages, this partnership will help fill the workforce pipeline from K-12 through higher education to employment, helping to ensure Duluth remains economically competitive. Duluth's future prosperity is tied to the prosperity of our businesses and their ability to attract and retain a competitive workforce. The Duluth Promise Initiative provides a promising step toward developing a robust workforce, catalyzing economic growth and prosperity for our region.

I strongly encourage you to include full funding for the Duluth Promise Initiative in your final bill.

Respectfully,



Roger J. Reinert
Mayor