



## Legislative Priority Issue #3 2019 Legislative Session

## Workforce Issues

### Background

The Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC) is a nine-county Regional Development Commission as established under Minnesota Statute §462.381-462.398 the “Regional Development Act.” As a representative of local units of government in Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock counties, the SRDC represents 9 counties, 80 cities, 163 townships and 32 school districts. The SRDC assists local units of government in the region with many economic development projects, a large component of which is being able to provide adequate workforce for new and existing businesses to allow them to be competitive in a national and global economy. Workforce includes various efforts to attract and retain qualified individuals to live and work in our communities. In addition to the SRDC’s Daycare Legislative Priority, the SRDC also supports other efforts to supply an adequate workforce to the region’s businesses.

### Policy Positions

#### 1. Workforce Housing

The SRDC supports programs to address the critical workforce housing shortage in Greater Minnesota; workforce housing programs that have no income or population restrictions, and which are focused on economic development and middle-income workers in Greater Minnesota. This includes at least \$20 million funding for workforce housing grant programs focused on increasing the supply of units in communities that can grow. The SRDC supports funding affordable or workforce housing programs at a level that accounts for the cost of prevailing wage regulations in housing construction, or seeking reforms in the program to reduce those costs.

#### 2. Greater Minnesota Job Training Programs

The SRDC supports the Job Training Incentive Program and any necessary updates to make the program more responsive to the needs of Greater Minnesota employers. The program should have an ongoing base budget of at least \$10 million annually. The SRDC encourages state policymakers to evaluate the current funding and structure of Minnesota’s technical schools to determine if needs are being met, and supports policy changes that enable technical schools to better address the workforce needs faced by Greater Minnesota communities.



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