

In support of the Regents Scholarship

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Kudos and applause to Governor Janklow for proposing a college scholarship program for regents scholars of South Dakota high schools. Recipients must be regents scholars who pledge not to use tobacco in any form while receiving that scholarship. As has been widely reported, regents scholars are graduates of a South Dakota high school who have a 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale), receive no final grade below a C and take a prescribed curriculum of high school classes.

Regent scholarship recipients must agree not to use tobacco since funding for that program comes from money South Dakota received from the recent legal settlement from several ?? tobacco companies. Count me among those who support the use of tobacco settlement money for this purpose.

I see this as a quadruple win!

- College students, at an age vulnerable to beginning to use tobacco, pledge not to use tobacco, which is a main goal of the settlement.
- Students will receive money to further their education.
- South Dakota wins by tangibly encouraging some of her brightest students to attend college at regent schools and technical institutions.
- South Dakota students who attend college in South Dakota are more likely to stay in our state than if they attend college out of state.

College-educated South Dakotans will be tomorrow's physicians, lawyers, teachers, business leaders and politicians. This scholarship program is actually an economic development investment. From the beginning, great ideas from people drive economic expansion!

As the legislature debates the merit of Governor Janklow's proposal, I suggest expanding the Regents Scholarship program to include South Dakota's private schools. ***Increase the education opportunities of South Dakota's brightest students.

Dakota Wesleyan University has served this region before South Dakota was even a state. Yes, we are a private university, but we have been committed to the public good of South Dakota. Yes, we take seriously the Methodist expression of our Christian heritage, but students, faculty and staff come from multiple religious groups and some from no religious group at all.

Scores of South Dakotans attest to the high quality undergraduate education they received from Dakota Wesleyan. Today Wesleyan graduates effectively lead in medicine, law, education and virtually all occupations vital to South Dakota. Although I cannot speak for Presentation College in Aberdeen, Mount Marty College in Yankton, or Augustana College and the University of Sioux Falls in Sioux Falls, they too have a similar type of values-based, character-building, high quality education as well. Their graduates are also leaders throughout South Dakota.

For the sake of educational options for students and their families, competition and high quality undergraduate education, I encourage the legislature to pass Governor Janklow's regents

scholarship proposal and open opportunities for student to use that scholarship at the accredited South Dakota university or college of their choice.