



January 28, 2026

Dear Representative

As President of Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, I write regarding the proposed bill HSB 533.

As Iowa's oldest college—founded in 1839—Loras College has served Iowans for nearly two centuries. We educate for professional roles that have evolved and changed—including those in the health care, financial, and educational sector. We were serving our community, the region, and the state in preparing for the professions needed 187 years ago and 100 years ago—and we serve Iowa students and citizens now. We are a nimble and responsive institution—with an extraordinary record to show it.

It is unnecessary to duplicate the excellent education provided at the bachelor's level to Iowans through this proposed legislation. It is unnecessary to significantly add to the state tax bill paid by Iowa taxpayers to fund this bill. Private colleges and universities are economic stimulators and are not costing Iowa taxpayers by offering these opportunities. Currently, the state appropriates \$3.9 billion to K-12 education, \$623 million to the Regent institutions, \$243 million to the community colleges, and \$0 to Iowa's private, not-for-profit colleges and universities. Iowa taxpayers will be on the hook for an additional tens of millions in taxes to be paid if the Iowa legislature enables Iowa's community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees, something that our Regent universities and twenty-six private colleges already do exceedingly well. Loras College welcomes any student who would like to pursue their educational and career goals here.

In your consideration of this bill, I urge you to consider these key points about what a Loras College education offers:

- 1). We graduate students in high demand areas including educators who are now teachers and administrators in the Dubuque Community School District and Holy Family Catholic Schools; professionals in the financial, marketing, and public relations sector in the local community and region; professionals contributing to the expanding health care needs for all populations.
- 2). Over the last five years, we have welcomed hundreds of transfer students to finish their education at Loras. In addition, we have longstanding transfer pathway agreements with area

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community colleges that provide a smooth and reliable experience for students. The transfer experience is flexible for students from community college to our institution.

3). Like our peers in the private college sector in Iowa, we offer an Iowa Promise grant to Pell eligible students, meeting tuition needs through generous financial aid.

4). Loras College provides nearly 300 full time jobs to the Dubuque community. We contribute to Dubuque's vitality through our 7,000+ alumni living in the greater Dubuque area. Significantly, we have over 10,000 graduates, alumni, and postgraduates living in the state of Iowa.

There is no need to duplicate the excellent education that is already available at the bachelor's level to Iowans through the proposed legislation. Furthermore, small private colleges and universities are economic stimulators and are not costing Iowa taxpayers to offer these opportunities. College towns, like Dubuque, benefit from private college partnerships. We help the economic vibrancy of our community, while building community. Through our athletics, arts and culture offerings, service and internships, and significant civic engagement. We contribute to our region's rural and urban areas.

Lastly, we want to ensure that students have choice and access to a variety of educational pathways, and this bill poses a significant threat to the sustainability of some of these small private institutions—an action that would make Iowa less appealing in its educational offerings. We do not live in an education desert—as the authors of HSB 533 suggest—but rather a state full of educational opportunity with a wide choice of degree pathways to include the trades, associate's, bachelor's, and graduate study. These small private colleges are a showcase piece of the state that contribute to the economic engine and community life that makes Iowa so unique.

Loras College will continue our centuries-old commitment to Iowa—ready to serve Iowa students who seek an education to contribute to their local communities and to make our state stronger and forward thinking for years to come. I urge you to not to support bill HSB 533 and instead, support the work of small colleges like Loras College to educate for the next generation.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Doyle, J.D. ('91)
President