Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

1. The sponsoring representative's first name:
   Ken

2. The sponsoring representative's last name:
   Borton

3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.
   n/a

4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:
   Kirtland Community College

5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:
   4800 W 4 Mile Rd, Grayling, MI 49738

6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:
   n/a

7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:
   Ken Borton, District 105

8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution.
   This simulator would be the only one operating at an institution of higher learning in Michigan and is an integral piece of the one-of-a-kind Michigan Forest Products Institute based at Kirtland Community College.

   Please see attached document for more information.

9. Attach documents here if needed:
   Attachments added to the end of this file.

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.
    100000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.
    ["None"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:
    University/College

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?
    Not applicable

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?
    Not applicable

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?
    Not applicable

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'
    N/A

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."
    Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:
    Simulator to be purchased as soon as funding becomes available.

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."
    Yes

This simulator would be the only one operating at an institution of higher learning in Michigan and is an integral piece of the one-of-a-kind Michigan Forest Products Institute based at Kirtland Community College.

1. Enhancing Practical Learning

- **Hands-On Experience in a Controlled Environment**: A timber harvester simulator allows students to gain practical skills without the risks associated with operating real machinery in the field.

- **Bridging the Skills Gap**: Students can learn industry-standard harvesting techniques in a safe and consistent environment, preparing them for immediate employment in forestry and logging operations.

- **Repeatable Training Scenarios**: Simulators enable students to practice complex tasks multiple times until they master them, without the costs or limitations of using actual equipment.

2. Safety Benefits

- **Reduced Risk of Accidents**: Operating timber harvesters is inherently dangerous, especially for beginners. A simulator removes the risk of injuries while still teaching critical skills.

- **Emergency Preparedness**: Simulators can replicate various scenarios, including equipment malfunctions and environmental challenges, preparing students to handle emergencies confidently in real-world conditions.

3. Cost-Effectiveness

- **Lower Operational Costs**: While the upfront cost of a simulator may seem significant, it eliminates the ongoing expenses of fuel, maintenance, and wear and tear associated with real machinery.

- **Reduced Liability**: Using a simulator mitigates the liability risks that come with training students on actual timber harvesters.

- **Public Funding Utilization**: Utilizing public funding for this investment ensures taxpayers' dollars are used to strengthen the local workforce, address industry needs, and provide accessible educational opportunities.

4. Environmental Sustainability

- **Minimizing Environmental Impact**: Training on simulators reduces the need for real-world harvesting exercises, protecting forests from unnecessary disturbances during student training sessions.

- **Energy Efficiency**: Simulators are a more sustainable alternative to running fuel-intensive machinery for training purposes.

5. Aligning with Industry Trends

- **Demand for Technologically Skilled Workers**: Forestry companies increasingly use advanced technology, including machine simulators, to improve operational efficiency. Training on a simulator equips students with skills that are highly sought after by employers.

- **Integration with Precision Forestry**: Simulators can introduce students to the concepts of precision forestry, such as GPS mapping and data analytics, giving them a competitive edge in the workforce.

6. Recruiting and Retaining Students

- **Attracting Students to the Program**: Offering access to cutting-edge technology like a timber harvester simulator can make the forestry program more appealing to prospective students.

- **Boosting Retention Rates**: Engaging, interactive training methods increase student satisfaction and retention, leading to a stronger, more successful program.

7. Supporting Local Industry and Workforce Development

- **Meeting Regional Workforce Needs**: The local community relies on forestry as a key industry, therefore a simulator can help address the skills gap by producing highly trained graduates.

- **Strengthening Industry Partnerships**: Collaborating with forestry companies to use the simulator can create internship and job placement opportunities for students, fostering long-term community partnerships.

8. Leveraging Public Funding for Broad Impact

- **Direct Community Benefit**: Public funding can ensure the community college continues to support workforce development in forestry, which is vital to the region's economy.

- **Equitable Access to Education**: With public funding, students from all economic backgrounds can access state-of-the-art training tools without significant increases in tuition or program fees.

- **Maximizing Taxpayer Investment**: Investing public funds in education ensures taxpayer dollars stay in the community by creating a skilled workforce, fostering economic growth, and supporting local industries.

9. Scalability and Long-Term Benefits for New and Current Employees

- **Adapting to Different Skill Levels**: Simulators are versatile, allowing programs to train both beginners and advanced students.

- **Expanding Program Offerings**: With a simulator, the college could offer additional certifications or short-term training programs for professionals looking to upskill.