

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4105

October 22, 2024

Tim Rave
President
South Dakota Board of Regents
306 E. Capitol Avenue
Suite 200
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Mr. Rave:

The rapid advancement of technology is transforming American lives in ways few could have foreseen. Among these advancements, data privacy has emerged as one of the most critical issues of our time. As digital systems become increasingly integrated into every aspect of life, the need to protect personal data is paramount. I am writing to express my support for Dakota State University's (DSU) proposal to offer a Master of Science degree in Data Privacy.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of participating in a data privacy roundtable at DSU, highlighting the university's leadership in addressing this critical issue. It was clear during our conversation that data breaches, cyberattacks, and the misuse of personal information are becoming more prevalent, threatening not only individual privacy but also national security and economic stability. A highly skilled workforce is essential to addressing these challenges, and DSU's proposed Master of Science degree in Data Privacy will play a key role in preparing professionals to navigate the complex and evolving landscape of consumer privacy. The proposed degree will equip students with the technical expertise to safeguard sensitive information and the essential knowledge to ensure compliance with data protection regulations.

As we continue to advance in areas such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and big data analytics, the demand for experts in data privacy will only grow, and South Dakota has the opportunity to be at the forefront of this critical field. I commend DSU for recognizing the importance of data privacy and for taking proactive steps to offer advanced training in this area.

Sincerely,


JOHN THUNE
United States Senator

Cc: Dr. José-Marie Griffiths, President, Dakota State University

Dennis Eger
8225 Beulah St
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060
March 26, 2025

South Dakota Board of Regents
306 E. Capitol Avenue
Suite 2000
Pierre, SD 57501

Members of the South Dakota Board of Regents,

In an era of great power competition where publicly available information (PAI) and commercially available information (CAI) are the key data elements to ongoing intelligence efforts, data privacy is of the utmost concern. The digital landscape continues to evolve, and the importance of data privacy is paramount, particularly in the Intelligence Community (IC) and Congress.

In today's interconnected world where the internet of things reigns supreme, data privacy is not merely a technical issue but a critical national security concern. A robust data privacy curriculum would equip students with the necessary skills to safeguard this information against unauthorized access, cyber threats, and data breaches. Moreover, as Congress continues to legislate and enforce data privacy laws and technology continues to advance, individuals with a deep understanding of data privacy principles will be necessary to advise policy makers and intelligence organizations.

By establishing a data privacy curriculum, academia can play a pivotal role in preparing the next generation of intelligence leaders who will shape the future of data privacy policy and legislation. I believe, graduates of this program will be well equipped to serve in various capacities within government, private sector, and academia, contributing to the overall security and privacy of our nation.

Sincerely,
Dennis Eger
Senior Executive
Army Intelligence

Dear South Dakota Board of Regents,

We, the Advisory Board for the Cyber Leadership and Intelligence program at Dakota State University, are writing to express our support for the development of a Master of Science in Data Privacy. Our primary role as an advisory board is to support the development and modification of the Cyber Leadership and Intelligence curriculum, ensuring the program equips students for a wide range of careers in the cyber field.

With our most sensitive health, financial, professional, and personal information stored on network systems, the risk of theft by malicious actors and misuse by authorized users continues to rise. The demand for highly trained privacy professionals has never been greater, as industries, municipalities, and other sectors increasingly recognize the technical and legal complexities of managing sensitive data.

The emergence of global privacy laws, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), highlights the growing need for specialized expertise in data security and privacy management. Organizations today face challenges not only in complying with these laws but also in building privacy-centric cultures that safeguard user data while enabling business innovation. The proposed program addresses these urgent needs by providing a rigorous curriculum that equips graduates with the skills, knowledge, and ethical frameworks required to navigate the rapidly evolving privacy landscape.

The Master of Science in Data Privacy is a curriculum area consistent with DSU's mission and expertise. As Dakota State University is nationally recognized as a leader in computer, network and cyber sciences, this program will further attract the respect and attention that the South Dakota Board of Regents desires for its institutions.

We unite in our full support of this new MS program in Data Privacy, and we are confident it will serve as an invaluable resource for students and the organizations that seek to hire them.

Sincerely,



D.C. Gillian

Chair, CLI Advisory Board

On behalf of

CLI Advisory Board Members

24 October, 2024