



North Dakota Grain Growers Association Testimony in Support of HB 1475 House Agriculture Committee February 5, 2021

Chairman Johnson, members of the House Agriculture Committee, for the record my name is Dan Wogsland, Executive Director of the North Dakota Grain Growers Association (NDGGA). NDGGA, through our contracts with the North Dakota Wheat Commission and the North Dakota Barley Council, engages in domestic policy issues on the state and federal level on behalf of North Dakota wheat and barley farmers. I am providing testimony for you today on behalf of NDGGA in support of HB 1475.

HB 1475, as you are all aware, creates the Agriculture Innovation Fund which would provide loans and grants for needed value-added agricultural businesses based in North Dakota. The Bank of North Dakota would administer the loan program while the grant program would be under the auspices of the Agriculture Commissioner based on recommendations from the Agricultural Products Utilization Commission. Using these excellent administrative resources ensures that value-added agriculture will be fostered in the state and at the same time taxpayer dollars will be protected. To NDGGA this bodes very well for all of agriculture in North Dakota.

NDGGA also supports the confidentiality provisions contained in Section 2 of the bill. Businesses need and deserve adequate trade secret protections in place in order to protect their value-added projects.

Chairman Johnson, members of the House Agriculture Committee, increasing opportunities for value-added agricultural industries in North Dakota is an essential component for the continued success of our state's agriculture. Providing and obtaining the funding necessary is always a challenge; HB 1475 provides that essential piece of the value-added puzzle for the benefit of North Dakota agriculture and the North Dakota economy.

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Therefore the North Dakota Grain Growers Association respectfully requests that the House Agriculture Committee give HB 1475 a Do Pass recommendation and would urge the full House to concur.