



**Testimony of Brenda Elmer
On behalf of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association
March 11, 2021
In Support of SB 2208**

Chairman Johnson and members of the House Agriculture Committee,

My name is Brenda Elmer and I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association.

Originally our association opposed SB 2208 when it substantially modified assessment drain processes and maintenance authority but the Senate Ag Committee was responsive to the significant concerns raised by many stakeholders and rewrote the measure to instead establish an interim study of water laws including combining assessment drain procedure statutes; establishment of an appeals and mediation process; water management by watershed; cost-benefit analyses on projects; and the relationship between the State Water Commission and water resource districts. The proposed study committee would wisely include both legislators and citizens- including landowners, water resource managers, and road authorities' representatives.

We support the bill in its present form and the NDCGA endorses the bill.

We appreciate the thoughtful and careful approach to considering changes that is reflected in the decision to make it a study. Water management is absolutely critical to North Dakota agriculture and significantly impacts our growers' livelihoods and operations. We appreciate the acknowledgement of this as evidenced in the current bill. And we hope that agriculture can be at the table to help make this process better. Thank you.