



**North Dakota Grain Growers Association
Testimony in Opposition to
SB 2037
Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs
Committee
February 2, 2023**

Chairman Luick, members of the Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs 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 opposition to SB 2037.

First, NDGGA applauds the work of the Interim Legislative Water Drainage Committee for all of their work regarding the water management laws in the state. As this Committee and the Water Drainage Committee is well aware, dealing with water management laws in North Dakota is a daunting task. That said, NDGGA does not agree with SB 2037 because the legislation ultimately will take away local control of water management projects, institutes largely untested mandates on local entities and ultimately makes orderly water management more difficult in the state.

Some examples; SB 2037 mandates the water management assessment process be relegated to an economic model created by economists and engineers rather than today's model which is driven by local landowners and water management boards. This takes away from local control.

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Second, the bill institutes untested mandates on water management projects. SB 2037 was developed based on economic analyses conducted by the State Water Commission for their cost-share grants which is not conducted on a parcel by parcel basis. Currently there exists the possibility of analysis tools which could possibly accomplish parcel by parcel analysis but as yet there is no practical tool for such usage in the state.

Finally, SB 2037 will make orderly water management more difficult in North Dakota. While in theory a parcel-by-parcel analysis may appear attractive the fact remains that such an analysis would be incredibly time consuming and expensive. Landowners would be assessed the cost of the analysis further adding to the cost of a potential project. Additionally, projects would take much longer to develop placing an added burden on landowners.

Therefore the North Dakota Grain Growers Association respectfully requests that the Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee give SB 2037 a Do Not Pass recommendation and would ask that the full Senate concur.