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January 5, 2023

68th Session Testimony on SB 2037
Chairman Dale Patten
Senate Energy and Natural Resources

I am Mark DeMars, a farmer from Bathgate, North Dakota. I am a member of the Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association (RRVSGA). RRVSGA represents the sugarbeet growers for the American Crystal Sugar Company (ACSC). Our members raise sugarbeets on approximately 400,000 acres and represent over one-third of the total sugarbeet production in the United States each year. I am writing this letter in opposition to SB 2027.

As a farmer led organization, RRVSGA opposes this bill because of the loss of local control, the added time, and increased costs to water projects. Drainage projects bring out strong emotions on both sides, however the current process operates as it should. When there is support for a project, it passes and when there isn't enough support, the project fails. The decisions are kept local and the process works.

Many farmers serve local water resource districts, we know when a project will benefit enough to tax ourselves. This bill will dilute the farmer's voice in choosing to tax or not tax ourselves. The current dispute resolution method that is in place works.

This bill will also slow down any water projects. Moving water is already a costly and burdensome task, and this bill makes it even more expensive and more time consuming. Further pushing water projects down the road.

Thank you for your consideration, we encourage you and the committee to vote NO on SB 2037.

Mark DeMars
RRVSGA ND Liaison

Cc: Harrison Weber – Executive Director – Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers