

Chairman and Members of the House Agriculture Committee,

My name is Erik Olson and I am a resident from Abercrombie, ND. Thank you for the opportunity to submit a testimony regarding bill 2327. I am here as a Neutral position to this bill. I fully support agriculture development for existing, expanding, and new “value-added” agriculture production. This bill can be very supportive to businesses within our State. What I am here and wanting to ask for today, is there to be careful wording included into this bill that would ensure out of state factory farms or CAFOs would not be eligible for such funds.

I have learned a lot about the CAFO, that most of you already know my community is being threatened with. I have learned that these facilities are only taxed to the amount of what it would be as if it were crop land. No matter the amount of resources they use or destroy. I have also learned that the maximum amount of money that a township can collect is a \$500 licensing fee. I have learned the enormous negative effects that this CAFO is going to bring to my community that will effectively fall on the resident’s tax dollars. I have also found evidence of frequent overuse and contamination of water. I have also learned that the product produced, specifically by the proposed Abercrombie Dairy, will be going out of state. With the scope of damage that will be happening to the environmental resources, future considerations will need to be focused on the millions of dollars that will eventually need to be allocated when these resources are compromised. I feel that the negative impacts these mega farms will bring to our state, need to be known and carefully considered.

We should not provide more funding to these CAFOs or factory farms from out of state businesses that will basically be using our state as a dumping ground and leaving it to the residents to deal with.

Again, I am here as a neutral because I firmly believe in building agriculture within our State for our future generations and can see what this bill can do for everyone. Agriculture is so important, and I’ve read some really good testimonies in favor to this bill because of the funding that our state was able to provide to their business. Let’s continue to ensure our state has protections in place and provide the needed funding for value-added agriculture businesses and not businesses that will affectively hurt our State.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak with you today and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.