



Chairman Beltz and Honorable Members of the House Agriculture Committee, for the record, I am Rachel Grosz, writing on behalf of North Dakota Farm Bureau (NDFB). NDFB would like to express our strong support for SB2342, in relation to a value-added milk processing facility incentive program. We thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

It is no secret the dairy sector has faced a multitude of hardships over the last several decades. While some dairy producers have hung on, we continue to see a steady decline in the number of dairy operations in the state.

NDFB represents 28,000 member-families and develops policy with a truly grass-roots approach. The bill before you aligns with the values and ideals our membership holds. We believe efforts to expand, diversify, and adopt value-added opportunities in agriculture are critical to our sustainability in the future.

The following policies reflect our support for this critical funding program:

**We support the diversification of our economy within the state of North Dakota including, but not limited to, energy, technology, and agriculture.**

**We believe state government programs which are designed to encourage business growth, should be equally available to production agriculture ventures.**

Senate Bill 2342 offers a strategic approach to revitalizing this important sector. Encouraging the development of value-added facilities within North Dakota will reduce transportation burdens for producers. Ultimately, the economic viability of our dairy industry depends on access to milk-processing facilities.

The interest in supporting processing via grants also incentivizes private investment in our ag economy—and our state. This bill will be an integral component in creating a once-again robust dairy sector. We are hopeful this program will give existing dairies opportunity to continue operating and increase profitability; as well as create the stability for new operations to enter the market. This bill, coupled with similar efforts seek to reinvigorate North Dakota's milk-production and bolster dairy cow inventory within our state.

Investing in value-added infrastructure not only aids the dairy sector, also it enhances the overall economic climate, as complementary sectors in ag will benefit from processing and potential increase in animal agriculture. In turn, our rural communities will also be positively impacted.

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Senate Bill 2342 represents a proactive initiative that addresses the current challenges dairy farmers face, as well as the importance of North Dakota remaining competitive and diverse in agricultural production. Supporting this bill is an investment in the future of North Dakota agriculture, making our state an attractive place to do business. We respectfully urge the committee to make a "Do-Pass" recommendation, thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Rachel Grosz  
Government Affairs Liaison  
North Dakota Farm Bureau- NDFB

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