

January 27, 2025

RE: SB 2018 Testimony by James Pladson, CEO and Founder of Reach Right USA

Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is James Pladson, I am the CEO, founder, and inventor of the Reach Right handle, an ergonomic attachment designed to easily fit any long-handled tool. Reach Right's innovative design extends the user's reach and allows them to maintain an upright, natural posture while performing tasks that would otherwise require repetitive bending over to maneuver long handled tools. This award-winning ergonomic solution reduces back strain and increases productivity when using tools such as shovels, rakes, or weed trimmers. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony regarding SB 2018—a program that supports entrepreneurship in North Dakota through funding and mentorship.

As a North Dakota entrepreneur, I had the privilege of being accepted into Phase 1 of the Innovate ND program in October 2024. The mentorship provided through my bi-monthly meetings has been invaluable to the growth and scaling of my business. These sessions connected me to local programs and successful business leaders, allowing me to learn from their experiences.

The Phase 1 funding allowed me to invest in marketing efforts, which has significantly contributed to the growth of my business. With these funds, I was able to generate approximately \$60,000 in revenue in December 2024 and nearly \$85,000 so far in January 2025. These results highlight how critical this program has been in enabling my business to succeed and grow.

I am now preparing to apply for Phase 2 of the Innovate ND program. If accepted, I am eager to continue learning from my mentors and utilize the additional funding to rebuild my website. A more professional and functional website will allow me to better convert visitors into customers, further strengthening my business's success.

I strongly encourage this committee to support SB 2018 and continue funding Innovate ND. This program provides North Dakota entrepreneurs with a robust support system to help grow and develop their businesses. As I've learned firsthand, entrepreneurship often brings unexpected challenges and expenses. The guidance, resources, and funding offered through Innovate ND have been invaluable, and I would not want to start a business in any other state.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,
James Pladson
CEO and Founder, Reach Right USA