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**Testimony of
Ryan Gregg
North Dakota Farmers Union
Regarding SB 2228
House Finance and Taxation
March 17, 2025**

Chairman Headland and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2228. My name is Ryan Gregg, and I am testifying on behalf of the members of the North Dakota Farmers Union (NDFU).

NDFU supports SB 2228, which allocates \$1 million to the Department of Commerce for grants aimed at preserving rural grocery stores and expanding food access in our state's farming communities. We are deeply concerned about the decline of groceries and the resulting lack of convenient, nutritious options. By promoting small business growth and improving nutrition, this legislation will help sustain and revitalize our rural communities.

SB 2228 builds on the success of the Rural Food Sustainability Grant established in the previous session.¹ Cities such as Milnor, Butte, and Casselton have already benefited from this program.² Supporting this bill will further enhance the quality of life in rural areas and ensure that producers have access to essential services.

We respectfully request a "Do Pass" recommendation on SB 2228. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

¹ *Rural Food Sustainability Grant*. (2023). Commerce | North Dakota. <https://www.commerce.nd.gov/community-services/community-development-rural-prosperity/cdrp-resources/cdrp-grant-programs/rural>

² *ND strategizes to combat rural community grocery store deserts*. (2024, December 28). Minotdailynews.com; Minot Daily News. <https://www.minotdailynews.com/news/local-news/2024/12/nd-strategizes-to-combat-rural-community-grocery-store-deserts/>