

Chairman Beltz & House Agriculture Committee,

My name is Emma McIntyre, and I am a Board Member for the Great Plains Food Bank as well as a lifelong North Dakota resident. As a North Dakotan in my 20s, I couldn't think of a more impactful way to give my time than by supporting an organization dedicated to ensuring that no senior, child, or family in our state has to go to bed hungry.

I am here today to ask for your support of **HB 1143**, a bill that will strengthen our ability to fight hunger **across** North Dakota. This is not just an investment in a facility—it is an investment in our communities, our economy, and the next generation of North Dakotans.

With food insecurity on the rise, we know this will affect our children most of all. The National Library of Medicine cites that food insecurity is associated with lower cognitive indicators, including diminished reading and mathematics proficiency. I ask you to give this generation the tools it needs to become productive citizens, and food is a great first step.

Hunger does not discriminate by county line or economic status; it affects rural and urban communities alike. It impacts children who struggle to focus in school, parents making impossible choices between food and rent, and seniors who have spent their lives building this state and now face food insecurity. By supporting this bill, you are ensuring that the Great Plains Food Bank has the capacity to serve all 53 counties in North Dakota with greater efficiency, better infrastructure, and expanded reach.

As a young leader in North Dakota, I look to you—the stewards of our state—to provide us with the tools we need to build a future where hunger is no longer a reality. This investment is a gift to every North Dakotan, ensuring that we grow up in a state where our neighbors don't have to rely on luck to know where their next meal will come from.

I urge you to **pass HB 1143** and help us take a meaningful step toward ending hunger in North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Emma McIntyre

Board Member, Great Plains Food Bank