

**Testimony of Laura Lacher**

**North Dakota Ethanol Producers Association**

**In Support of HB 1332**

**March 20, 2025**

Chairman Luick and members of the Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee:

My name is Laura Lacher, executive director of the North Dakota Ethanol Producers Association (NDEPA). On behalf of our members, I want to express our strong support for HB 1332, which provides essential infrastructure grants to support new and existing value-added agriculture businesses. This investment is a strategic opportunity to enhance North Dakota's agricultural economy, strengthen our supply chain, and ensure long-term industry competitiveness.

The ethanol industry is a critical driver of North Dakota's economy, creating high-quality jobs, adding value to our state's farm production, and providing new market opportunities for growers. The success of our industry—and the broader agriculture sector—relies on smart, efficient infrastructure that allows us to process, transport, and market our products effectively. Without continued investment, we risk limiting our ability to expand, modernize, and remain competitive in an evolving global market.

HB 1332 is more than just an infrastructure funding bill—it is a direct investment in North Dakota's farmers, rural communities, and value-added agriculture businesses. Upgraded infrastructure will not only improve transportation and processing capabilities but also enhance supply chain resilience, reduce costs, and attract further private investment. These grants will help build the foundation for future growth, keeping North Dakota at the forefront of agricultural innovation and economic development.

North Dakota has always been a leader in value-added agriculture, and ethanol production is a part of that success. By supporting this legislation, the legislature is ensuring that our state remains a top competitor in agriculture and biofuels, driving both economic sustainability and rural prosperity.

We appreciate your commitment to strengthening North Dakota's agriculture industry, and we strongly urge a "Do Pass" recommendation on HB 1332. Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.