



**North Dakota Grain Growers Association
Testimony in Support of HB 1400
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
March 20, 2025**

Chairman Patten, Members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, for the record my name is Dan Wogsland representing the North Dakota Grain Growers Association (NDGGA). NDGGA is in support of HB 1400.

HB 1400 demonstrates North Dakota's commitment to responsible environmental stewardship while balancing economic development and energy infrastructure needs.

Key Benefits of HB 1400

1. Proactive Environmental Mitigation

- This bill establishes a clear and structured approach for mitigating the environmental impacts of energy conversion and transmission facilities.
- By directing funds to the Environmental Impact Mitigation Fund, the state ensures that financial resources are available to address adverse environmental effects.

2. Flexibility and Localized Mitigation Efforts

- The bill prioritizes mitigation efforts in the areas most directly impacted by development. This ensures that communities and ecosystems affected by energy projects benefit first.
- The four-tiered mitigation structure (impact area → county → region → state) guarantees that local concerns are addressed before expanding the scope of mitigation.

3. Financial Accountability and Transparency

- The biennial reporting requirement ensures transparency in fund disbursements, allowing the Legislative Assembly to oversee mitigation efforts effectively.
- The state treasurer's oversight of fund investments further ensures proper financial stewardship.

4. Strategic Use of Conservation Easements and Leaseholds

- Allowing the Agriculture Commissioner to purchase and manage easements or leaseholds ensures that environmental mitigation efforts are long-term and effective.
- The provision to terminate easements or leaseholds when they are no longer necessary prevents unnecessary government land control, demonstrating a balanced approach.

5. Support for North Dakota's Energy Future

- The bill provides a clear mechanism for energy companies to voluntarily contribute to environmental mitigation without excessive regulatory burdens.
- By not limiting an applicant's ability to conduct mitigation activities independently, HB 1400 supports both industry innovation and environmental responsibility.

6. Emergency Clause for Immediate Action

- The inclusion of an emergency declaration ensures that these critical environmental and economic policies take effect without delay, addressing urgent mitigation needs across the state.

Conclusion

HB 1400 is a practical, well-balanced piece of legislation that aligns with North Dakota's values of responsible resource management and economic development. It enhances environmental protections, supports local communities, and provides a clear, effective framework for energy development mitigation. Therefore, Chairman Patten, Members of the Committee, NDGGA would respectfully request a Do Pass recommendation on HB 1400 and would urge the full Senate to concur.