



Testimony of Randy Melvin
On behalf of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association
February 4, 2021
In Support of 1437

Chairman Johnson and members of the House Agriculture Committee,

My name is Randy Melvin and I farm near Buffalo, ND. I am a board member and past president of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association. On behalf of our state's corn growers, I express our support of HB 1437.

Subsurface water management is important for agricultural production and for our state. Subsurface drainage is an extremely effective tool for removing excess water from our land so that it can stay in operation, allowing improved crop production and yield. It improves the soil health by reducing erosion and compaction. Water quality is also improved by reducing phosphorus and sediment losses as compared to surface only drained fields. Subsurface drainage can also help control the velocity of water movement by reducing the flow and speed of water compared to surface drainage and provides an avenue to create retention and flood mitigation benefits.

HB 1437 will reduce local officials' expenses and provide them with a simpler permitting process. Replacing the deed holder with the tax payer evidence of ownership requirement for the permit is a tremendous improvement and will save much time and effort. An additional benefit to this legislation is the protection for the applicant with regards to public disclosure of the permit application. We believe this language will add protections against frivolous complaints by parties not directly affected.

Overall, HB 1437 improves the permit application process for both a permit applicant and local government. We believe this is a sensible solution to this process. I ask for your "do pass" vote on this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I stand for any questions.