

North Dakota

Travel Alliance Partnership

P.O. Box 2599
Bismarck, ND 58502
(701) 355-4458
FAX (701) 223-4645

MEMBERS

America's Best Value
Inn & Suites
Basin Electric
Power Cooperative
Bismarck Airport
Bismarck-Mandan CVB
Bottineau Area Chamber of
Commerce
Destination Marketing
Association of North Dakota
Devils Lake CVB
Dickinson CVB
Eastbay Campground
Fargo Air Museum
Fargo-Moorhead CVB
Friends of Lake Sakakawea
Greater Grand Forks CVB
Hampton Inn & Suites Minot
Airport
Jamestown Tourism
Leistikow Park Campground
Lone Butte Ranch/Log Cabin
Vacations
McKenzie County Tourism
Minot Convention & Visitors
Bureau
Missouri Valley Heritage Alliance/
Fort Abraham Lincoln
Foundation
Municipal Airport Authority
of the City of Fargo
National Hospitality Services
Newman Outdoor Advertising
Norsk Hostfest Association
North Dakota Association of
Rural Electric Cooperatives
North Dakota State Fair
North Dakota Tourism Division
(ex-officio)
Odney
Rocky Mountain International
Roosevelt Park Zoo
State Historical Society of
North Dakota Foundation
Theodore Roosevelt Medora
Foundation
Valley City CVB/Sheyenne RV
Scenic Byway
Vern's Rental
Williston CVB

Testimony of Kyle Martin

Executive Director

Travel Alliance Partnership

In support of HB 1019

January 8, 2021

Chairman Monson and members of the House Appropriations Education and Environment Committee:

My name is Kyle Martin, and I am the executive director of the Travel Alliance Partnership (TAP). TAP is a coalition of travel industry stakeholders, including CVBs, state attractions, businesses and other interested stakeholders, in this viable and growing sector of North Dakota's economy. On behalf of the tourism industry and its partners, I am writing to voice support for HB 1019.

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed tourism across the United States. Millions of Americans have been forced to cancel or change their travel plans, opting now for experiences that offer wide open spaces and immersion in the great outdoors. As a result, North Dakota's parks have experienced a record-breaking season, reporting a 35 percent increase in campsites this season compared to 2019. September and October were some of the busiest camping months in North Dakota, noting a 173% and 339% increase in camping numbers from 2019 respectively. These record-breaking numbers also lead to increased demand on the staff and resources,

emphasizing the need for additional funding for North Dakota Parks and Recreation.

The Canadian border closure has also impacted North Dakota's tourism, with North Dakota experiencing 10% of its normal volume of Canadian visitors. With no indication as to when the border could reopen, tourism destinations, including the International Peace Gardens and multiple border communities will feel the economic strain of the pandemic.

TAP asks the House Appropriations Education and Environment Committee to consider the impacts of the pandemic, which has resulted in increased visitation and usage of parks and campsites, and to consider additional funding to ensure our parks can sustain their newfound popularity as travelers look to North Dakota and its great outdoors as their premiere tourism destination.