

NORTH DAKOTA BAKKEN SHALE

William Pete - Testimony

FinTech Sandbox Opportunity

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My name is William Pete and I have been a blockchain researcher and tech enthusiast for years. I recently graduated with my Masters in Business Administration from Capella University in Minnesota. I also had the honor of NASA JPL naming an asteroid after me - 22786 Willipete. I have a patent for a blockchain technology in the oil and gas industry and have worked for close to 3 years on building a tech platform that seeks to allow an alternative use for crude oil as a store of value on a blockchain. This strategy offers a unique approach for my company Energy Ledger Inc. which seeks to provide a public blockchain for transparent energy transactions on the blockchain. This approach is incredibly important to the financial future of North Dakota and would allow the development of a banking and financial technology hub - extending Minnesota's already existing 'Silicon Prairie' westward. I am confident that there is a promising future for North Dakota's local economy within the technology space. Through providing a 'Blockchain Corridor' as outlined in this recent legislature - I believe that there is a chance that this area grows prolifically as a haven for technologies such as Blockchain to develop in tandem with established industries such as Oil & Gas.

There are a plethora of blockchain data companies including Energy Ledger, Data Gumbo, and Ondiflo which are building solutions utilizing this technology. The benefit of being next to abundant oil reserves and infrastructure is one of the most important factors for these companies to be able to implement cost savings, raise bottom lines, and ultimately bringing more value to the oil & gas industry through the commoditization of data. Through data acting as a commodity in and of itself - the highest value possible can be positioned on these commodities and their existence in storage for generations to come.

Almost every major oil & gas company has joined the Blockchain for Energy Coalition (<https://www.blockchainforenergy.net/>), including Chevron, Exxon, Shell, ConocoPhillips, and Equinor - with a \$6 million dollar investment from Equinor being made in blockchain company

Data Gumbo. Through North Dakota opening its doors to startups in the Energy Industry through an 800K investment in a FinTech sandbox - it is possible to attract companies like mine and others to headquarter in North Dakota. This will herald a new era in the Bakken Shale formation's history where tech startups with lasting longevity will lay down roots in this area in attempt to market the data generated from drilling operations and geological surveys. Many of these companies will spend their money here, build new infrastructure, and hire talent from other areas to move to the area.

I personally believe that there is also a larger scope than just Energy companies who may be interested in this region as well. Many blockchain and cryptocurrency startups will be looking for a location that provides clear guidance, opportunity, and regulatory structure for their startup. Growing up in the midwest I have become well acquainted with the challenges and more than often - the shortcomings of not being able to attract the right talent to a certain area. With respect to Blockchain - I can confidently say if **House Bill 1268 & Concurrent Resolution 3024** are passed within the state of North Dakota, there will be an almost definite influx of technologies companies looking to headquarter their operations and do business here.