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**Testimony of
Matt Perdue
North Dakota Farmers Union
Before the
Senate Appropriations Committee
January 7, 2021**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2019. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am here on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union's (NDFU) members.

NDFU supports SB 2019, specifically the Adult Farm Management (AFM) line item, which maintains the base funding level for the AFM program.

The AFM program is an important resource to family farmers and ranchers. The program offers critical support for goal setting, recordkeeping and financial management. During the last several years, low commodity prices, market disruptions, adverse weather and eroding financial conditions have created major challenges for agricultural producers. The AFM program gives farmers the tools they need to persevere through the tough times and flourish in the good times.

NDFU is also concerned by the consistent increase in the average age of farmers and ranchers. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, the average North Dakota producer is 56 years old. The AFM program gives beginning farmers the tools they need to continue their families' and our state's proud agricultural tradition.

By maintaining the current level of funding, you will ensure the Adult Farm Management program remains a valuable resource for farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for your time. I will stand for questions.

