

Testimony of Josh Mardikian

Vice President Merchandising and Marketing, Harvestone, LCP
North Dakota Ethanol Producers Association

In Support of HB 1148

January 20, 2023

Chairman Thomas and members of the House Agriculture Committee,

I am Josh Mardikian, vice president of merchandising and marketing for Harvestone, LCP. Harvestone, LCP is a member of the North Dakota Ethanol Producers Association (NDEPA), which represents North Dakota's six ethanol plants, industry stakeholders and associated businesses. On behalf of NDEPA, I am here today to voice support for House Bill 1148, which creates a \$15 million agriculture infrastructure fund.

Thanks to North Dakota's innovative private sector and supportive state government, North Dakota's ethanol industry is a prime example of value-added agriculture. Our industry converts up to 60 percent of the state's corn crop into more than 550 million gallons of ethanol, 1.5 million tons of high-value livestock feed (distillers grain) and 20 million gallons of corn oil used in renewable diesel. According to a recent study conducted by North Dakota State University, the ethanol industry contributes nearly \$1.7 billion annually to the state's economy and provides thousands of direct and indirect jobs.

Rural infrastructure, including roads and bridges, water and sewer lines, and electrical and gas supplies, is essential to securing feedstock (corn) as well as advancing numerous future opportunities, such as sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), for the ethanol industry. Our plants are continually innovating and exploring additional uses for ethanol. The funding in HB 1148 will be instrumental in moving forward with capital improvements to take advantage of opportunities, thus creating additional sustainability for the industry.

We thank you for your continued support of the state's ethanol and agriculture industries and urge your favorable consideration of HB 1148. Thank you for your time, I stand for any questions.