



Testimony of Andrew Mauch

In support of HB 1148

January 20, 2023

Chairman Thomas and members of the House Agriculture Committee,

I am Andrew Mauch. I farm in the southeastern part of the state near Hankinson, ND. I am also the president of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association (NDCGA), which serves as the voice, and represents more than 13,000 corn growers across the state. NDCGA is here to voice support of House Bill 1148, the creation of an agriculture infrastructure fund.

Last month, Governor Burgum joined NDSU at the State Capitol to unveil a first of its kind comprehensive study of the economic contribution of agriculture in the state. For the year 2020, agriculture contributed nearly \$31 billion to the economy and more than 110,000 jobs and represented nearly 25 percent of the state economy.

Agriculture's economic success goes hand in hand with good, reliable, public infrastructure. Up to 60 percent of North Dakota's corn gets delivered to ethanol plants around the state. As both industries grow across the state access to funds such as the agriculture infrastructure fund will be essential to maintaining reliable access to markets.

Economic development from value-added agriculture project in a community is typically a tremendous advantage, bringing increased property tax revenues and the creation of jobs that is incredibly advantageous, but often times those benefits aren't immediate. Local governments are in a position whereby they need to front the costs of the basic infrastructure and that can be burdensome long before the benefits of the fully realized project begin to

present economic development projects. This legislation and corresponding funding, the agriculture infrastructure fund, can be the missing link that communities need, to relieve them during the process before it comes to full fruition.

The North Dakota Corn Growers Association mission statement is “growing a healthy, profitable business climate for northern corn,” and this state investment would help the state’s corn growers towards their economic success. Thank you for your time and NDCGA asks for a ‘Do Pass’ recommendation on this vital funding to help local governments and value-added agriculture in House Bill 1148.