



**Testimony of Jason Rayner
On behalf of the North Dakota Corn Utilization Council
January 27, 2023
In Opposition of HB 1153**

Chairman Thomas and members of the House Agriculture Committee,

My name is Jason Rayner and I serve as a board member of the North Dakota Corn Utilization Council (Council), serving farmers in District 2. I farm with my family in Finley, ND. Not only am I a check-off paying corn producer, but I am member to the North Dakota Corn Growers Association (Association).

I am speaking in opposition of HB 1153 on behalf of the Council. Prior to serving on the Council, it was my understanding that the dollars being assessed at the first sale of my grain in North Dakota were being entrusted to elected officials and used for research, education, promotion, and market development. When I became a Council member, I was pleased that these funds were being used as intended. The Council works diligently to seek out projects and partnerships, both nationally and internationally, with a proven return for the North Dakota producer.

The spending of check-off funds is transparent and deliverables are provided to check-off paying producers in a variety of ways, including through the publication of an annual report and year-in-review. The 7 elected Council members have a fiduciary responsibility to manage these funds as intended by law.

I am proud to be a Council member and to be able to share the success stories of ND checkoff dollars, especially to those farmers in District 2 who elected me to represent them. Success stories I am proud of include the expansion of ethanol pump infrastructure statewide through the Unleaded88 Grant Program, which provides funding to retail stations looking to convert fuel pumps to Unleaded88. I am also proud of the efforts made to provide training through an agriculture based teacher education program. These teachers each make an impact on thousands of students per year, creating positive outcomes for the agricultural industry. With a reduction in Council funding due to HB 1153, programs like these would disappear.



It is my belief that should HB 1153 pass, the North Dakota corn check-off dollars will no longer be used solely for priorities as intended by the 13,000 corn producing farmers in this state and refunds of these assessment dollars will increase.

I urge you to vote "no".