

**Testimony of Samantha Vangsness**

**Executive Director, North Dakota Ethanol Producers Association**

**In Support of HB 1437**

**January 26, 2023**

Chairman Thomas and members of the House Agriculture Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today, I am Samantha Vangsness. I am executive director for the North Dakota Ethanol Producers Association (NDEPA), which represents North Dakota's six ethanol plants, industry stakeholders and associated businesses. I am here today to voice support for HB 1437, which provides \$1.21 million for grants to counties or regional planning councils to conduct rural development site analyses.

Thanks to North Dakota's innovative private sector and supportive state government, North Dakota's ethanol industry has been able to expand into various markets. The industry converts 40-60 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.

NDEPA identified livestock expansion in North Dakota as a top priority during its strategic planning spring of 2022. The state's ethanol industry produces 1.5 million tons of dried distillers grains (DDGs), a high-quality, protein-rich feed that is consumed by various livestock. Our plants currently export 90% of the distillers grain produced out of the state. Enhanced livestock development is important to keeping more of the product in the state, and this bill is a step in the right direction for attracting livestock development across the state.

Thank you for your time and I respectfully urge a 'Do Pass' recommendation on HB 1437. I stand for any questions.