

March 15, 2023

Chairman Thomas and members of the House Agriculture Committee  
Legislative Assembly of North Dakota

Re: Senate Bill 2279  
**SUPPORT** Letter

Representatives Thomas and Members,

My family has been raising potatoes in the Crystal area for over 70 years. When potatoes were first grown, the only mode of transportation was the railroad. Therefore, most of the potato storages were built on or near a railroad for access to transportation. Most of them were on Railroad Lease property out of necessity and were therefore considered commercial property.

As the industry has grown the warehouses have grown larger and most of the lease property has been bought by the farmers. Since the farmers now own their property, they should no longer be considered commercial property. They are storing only their own potatoes and not using the warehouses commercially such as storing other people's potatoes. Therefore, these storages should be considered part of their larger farm unit because without them they would not be raising potatoes.

This is not only a problem for potato storages but many grain and other agricultural storage warehouses that end up being on small parcels away from their farm plant. I know there is many grain bin sites located away from the main farm. It could even be an abandoned grain elevator in a town that can be put to good use and kept up instead of falling down. Would it be bought by a farmer if it was considered commercial property? Probably not.

I believe North Dakota law intends for all farm property to be Agricultural not commercial

Therefore, these warehouses should be considered agricultural and not taxed commercial.

This needs to be clarified because not all storage in the state is treated equally. This Bill will accomplish that.

I respectfully request the ND Agriculture Committee votes to **support SB 2279**.

Sincerely,

David Moquist