

Senate Concurrent Resolution 4014

March 9, 2023

House Agriculture Committee

Honorable Representative Thomas, Chairman

Chairman Thomas and Committee,

For the record, I am Senator Brad Bekkedahl from District 1 in Williston and I am honored to introduce today SCR 4014, which is a resolution encouraging the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the National Park Service to modify its proposed livestock management plan to continue to allow for interpretative, cultural, and historical purposes the presence of longhorn steers in the North Unit and the presence of a wild horse herd in the South Unit of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota. The resolution is self-explanatory and the title aptly describes its intent. With your permission Chairman Thomas and for further support I would like to quote Governor Burgum in his letter to the National Park Service “For decades and decades, these horses have coexisted peacefully with the national park, and, in the process, have become a hugely popular attraction and an indelible symbol of the untamed character of the Badlands.” This resolution expresses our legislative intent further urging the US Department of Interior to find a way to manage the wild horses and longhorn herd in a manner and size that protects the environmental integrity and capacity of the park, as well as for the wild horses, that supports the genetic diversity necessary for their survival.

Chairman Thomas, this issue has raised enormous support and passions, not just in North Dakota, but nationally and internationally. You will hear from others this morning supporting the resolution and its intent, and I thank them for their presence as well. I appreciate the consideration of the committee for this resolution and will stand for any questions at this time.