

North Dakota State Fair Association CC: 4.1-45

January 6, 2023 10:30am

HB1009 – State Fair Premium Dollar Appropriations
Prairie Room of the State Capitol
Education and Environment Appropriations

Good Morning Chairman Nathe. Members of the Committee.

My name is Renae Korslien, Manager of the North Dakota State Fair Association. I am here this morning to ask for your support of HB1009 for premium dollars for exhibitors at the State Fair for the Years of 2023 and 2024. We will use one half of these dollars for each year. These dollars are used for the prizes for the exhibitors only. The State Fair does not use these dollars for any support of the exhibitor's event as it does not pay for the Judges or any expense to put the livestock or static exhibits competition on.

We are asking for \$570,000 for the biennium, which shows an increase of \$27,167. But we are asking for the appropriations for the 4-H, FFA and open class exhibitors to get back to the 2015 appropriations of \$570,000.

41,361 exhibits were brought onto the fairgrounds by 4-H, FFA and Open class exhibitors in 2022. These projects have been worked on throughout the year by these folks. With all the negative things that are happening at communities across the country....the time that was spent with their parents and/or grandparents, 4-H Leaders and FFA Advisors working on these projects may just be the time that one student needed right at that time. One night in the barn being taught how to watch for that new born calf that might need help.... Or welding that piece of pipe correctly so it doesn't break...might just be the encouragement that student needs to be encouraged to move on to better thoughts.....

The 2022 State Fair was a success. We are very thankful for our 27 full time loyal staff members that have been with us for several years. These loyal workers pulled us through a fair when we could not hire the normal amount of people during fair time. We count on several individuals and many groups for our labor force to welcome the over 314,271 people that come onto the fairgrounds in 2022. We had contracted for labor with many different groups back in January...but when July came they could not fill their contracts. That is a very common thing happening now days, but it definitely put us into a panic So our staff got busy and contacted groups they were affiliated with, friends and family... and worked extra long shifts.

So when we review things that are at the top of our mind for the future

Safety and Security

Staffing...staff that will actually show up for work and work until it is done!!

Flood protection. As you know the fairgrounds flooded in 2011 and as of right now these State owned buildings do not have any flood protection. So we need your help to protect the fairgrounds.

Getting ready for this time with you... I was thinking back to some of your previous questions. First of all these premium appropriations are the only funding we receive from the state. The salaries, insurance benefits, retirement, any money spent by the State Fair Association is spent from dollars we have made. Yes, the legislators have approved one time funding requests over the years, but the yearly appropriation request is normally for premium dollars. Many legislators often think that we are like most State Agencies and that we are included in the general fund appropriations for state agencies...so just trying to make that clearer for you.

We have handed out our annual reports explaining our entire finances for the past year. We have tried very hard to prepare for the next years expenses. Craig Rudland and myself took over the management of the State Fair in December of 2009. (We have both been with the fair since the 80's).

Since that time we have had to cancel two fairs....once for the 2011 Flood and once for Covid in 2020. We said after the flood cancellation we would do whatever we could to try and build finances that could at least let us plan for the next fair. We believe we have done that, but with everything increasing in price..we need to continue to budget.....

There are other folks here ready to tell their story so unless you have questions.....