

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, for the record my name is Katelyn Duchscher, and I am a North Dakota FFA State Officer serving as the 2022-2023 State Secretary for the North Dakota FFA Association. I am here today on behalf of the North Dakota State Fair on House Bill 1009 to support the allocation of \$570,000.00 dollars in premium dollars for exhibitors at the North Dakota State Fair. I would appreciate your full support of \$570,000.00 in premium dollars in House Bill 1009.

I am here today to share a little bit of my background and experiences with the North Dakota State Fair exhibits and premium dollars. Growing up, I attended Rugby High School and I was an active member of the Rugby FFA Chapter, serving as the Chapter Vice President for two years.

During my time in Rugby FFA, I was enrolled in numerous agricultural education classes, where I built projects that involved wood, metal, and floral arranging. For example, in my early years of high school, I built numerous projects that included a birdhouse, toolbox, high table stool, and a step stool. In my later years, I fabricated metal signs, metal stools, and floral arrangements. A few of my projects went straight to my home or were placed in Rugby for community use. But, the majority of my projects were sent to the North Dakota State Fair, where they were judged, put on display, and received premium dollars.

There is no greater sense of accomplishment than walking into FFA Hall at the North Dakota State Fair and seeing your project with a ribbon on it. Walking around FFA Hall and looking for my projects with my friends and family are fond memories that I hold very dear to me. My mom also loved the experience, as she made me take a photo with every single project I exhibited. I like to tell people that my wood, metal, and floral skills improved as the years went on and I learned many technical and life skills, but due to the photo evidence on my mom's phone, I cannot get away with that lie!!!!

Premium dollars played a pivotal role in my State Fair exhibiting experience. The money I received through premium dollars went into my future projects to purchase materials. These premium dollars also gave me the opportunity to build upon my metal, woodworking, and floral skills, plus allow me to continue to submit projects to the North Dakota State Fair. Without the premium dollars, I would not have been able to submit nearly the amount of projects that I did as a Rugby FFA member. Premium dollars helped me gain confidence in enhancing my metal, woodworking, and floral design skills. I also developed my personal skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. I am forever grateful to the North Dakota State Fair and North Dakota Legislators for providing me with these opportunities.

I would appreciate your full support of the allocation of \$570,000.00 in premium dollars in House Bill 1009, which will be used solely as premium dollars for exhibitors. Thank you for allowing me to speak to you, and thank you for believing in the future generations of North Dakota agriculture.

Are there any questions?