



**Testimony of Dana Hager
Economic Development Association of North Dakota
In Support of SB 2009
March 3, 2023**

Chair Monson and members of the House Appropriations Government Operations Division:

The Economic Development Association of North Dakota represents more than 80 rural and urban economic development organizations on the front line of growing businesses and communities in North Dakota. The organization primarily aims to promote new wealth creation throughout North Dakota to develop more vibrant communities and improve quality of life. For these reasons, our organization and its members want to express support for SB 2009, especially regarding the Agricultural Products Utilization Commission (APUC), the Bioscience Innovation Grant fund and the North Dakota Trade Office.

EDND members support Agriculture Products Utilization Commission (APUC), and EDND supports the inclusion of \$5.1 million for the APUC program as it came out of the Senate.

The bioscience and biotechnology fields can potentially broaden the tax base and pose North Dakota as a leader in this critical, newly developing sector. EDND supports the Senate's inclusion of \$12 million for Bioscience Innovation Grants. As we have seen with UAS, investing in new technologies and ideas can significantly impact our state's direction.

Finally, one of EDND's top legislative priorities is the diversification of North Dakota's economy. The North Dakota Trade Office supports agriculture exports and other industries that diversify the economy, such as technology, manufacturing and energy. We ask for continued funding to continue its important mission.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for SB 2009 and for your continued commitment to keeping North Dakota globally competitive and diversifying the state's economy.