

Support HB 1379

House Appropriations Committee

February 8, 2023

Good morning, Chairman Vigesaa and Committee members.

I am Larry Syverson from Mayville, I grow soybeans on my farm in Traill County, I am the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors for Roseville Township, and I am also the Executive Secretary of the North Dakota Township Officers Association. NDTOA represents nearly 6,000 Township Officers that serve in more than 1,100 dues paying member townships.

North Dakota Township Officers support the creation of the Agriculture Infrastructure fund to help with the costs inherent in the development of value-added agriculture. Long-term, these projects will increase the profitability of agriculture and property values, and with that the tax base will grow. But long-term gain doesn't pay for immediate needs, we hope this fund will be available to kick-start or enhance these developments.

We also support the creation and funding of the County and Township Bridge Fund. All too often bridges on rural roads are deficient, posted with limits far below what is needed to carry agricultural and energy industry products out and the necessary supporting materials in. It is hard to lead the nation in so many agricultural products when the condition of our bridges ranks North Dakota 42<sup>nd</sup>.

In some counties it is very hard to get a bridge on a township road on the county priority list, it is our hope that the County and Township Bridge Fund will help the counties catch up their bridge projects and then the township bridge needs might be addressed.

Chairman Vigesaa and Committee Members, that concludes my prepared testimony. On behalf of the membership of NDTOA, I ask that you give HB 1379 your favorable recommendation and I will try to answer any questions.