



**Testimony of Dana Hager  
Economic Development Association of North Dakota  
In Support of SB 2240  
March 13, 2023**

Chair Vigesaa and members of the House Appropriations Committee:

I am Dana Hager, executive director of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND). I want to express our support for SB 2240 regarding the base retention grant program.

EDND represents more than 80 state economic development organizations on the front line of economic development efforts throughout North Dakota. The organization's primary purpose is to promote the creation of new wealth throughout North Dakota to develop more vibrant and efficient communities and improve quality of life.

North Dakota's long-term future depends on economic diversification and supporting ventures that bring wealth to the state. SB 2240 will restore community military funding to communities with air force bases or air national guard facilities and help prepare our military communities for what the future holds.

The military and defense industry is a significant driver of economic development in the state, specifically in the regions where bases and military development are located. The positive benefits from these military installations impact every citizen in North Dakota. Often overlooked, the companies that support the military are major employers and tax generators.

Having a strong military presence in North Dakota changes the dynamics of our state. A significant number of servicemen and women exit the military every year. These individuals are highly skilled, community-oriented individuals and families that provide a workforce for private companies. North Dakota has a high-quality of life, making it common for these citizens to stay where they were based. This is a significant asset for economic development efforts.

Thank you for your energy and discussion regarding the base retention grant program and the importance of supporting our military excellence in North Dakota. EDND urges you to support SB 2240. Thank you.