

Testimony of Mr. Keith Lund
Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation President & CEO

House Bill 1455
House Finance and Taxation Committee
Bismarck, North Dakota – February 6, 2023

Chairman Headland, Vice Chairman Hagert, and members of the House Finance and Taxation Committee. My name is Keith Lund, and I am President & CEO of the Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation. I am providing testimony today in support of HB 1455.

As a regional economic development organization, the Grand Forks Region EDC's focus is the expansion and diversification of the Grand Forks region's economy, and by extension, the State of North Dakota's economy. In pursuit of this goal, we strive to grow industries that bring additional resources to North Dakota through the sale of products and services across the nation, and in many cases, the world. The bioscience industry, with its vast applications, is a key target of many economic development regions across the nation, including ours.

HB 1455 will provide a sales and use tax exemption for materials used in research, development and production of bioscience and biotechnology products. To grow the bioscience industry, North Dakota must be competitive. 38 states have deployed similar policies to make their regions more attractive to bioscience businesses seeking a new or expanded location. In fact, we have seen bioscience activity transfer out of North Dakota to other states with these policies in place. The passage of HB 1455 would not only increase North Dakota's competitiveness with other states, but it would also strengthen the competitiveness of companies that currently operate in North Dakota, encouraging growth here rather than in other parts of the country.

We strongly believe in the potential of the bioscience industry to become a future driver of North Dakota's economy and to make a lasting impact on the State. This potential would be greatly accelerated by the passage of HB 1455.

Thank you, Chairman Headland, Vice Chairman Hagert, and members of the House Finance and Taxation Committee for your service to North Dakota and for the opportunity to provide testimony today.