

Dear Committee Members,

I strongly support House Bill No. 1175. While the main purpose of state trust land is to generate funding for K-12 schools, it is still public land. As it stands, lessees have the power to take that public land and essentially turn it into private land by posting. I am a public land owner, and am currently unable to access certain portions of public land, solely because a lessee has decided that they don't want anyone else there, for whatever reason. This is a slippery slope. In recent years, we have seen a steep increase in acres of State Trust land posted. Do we want to continue to let this happen until all state trust land is posted by lessees? The passing of this bill should have no effect on the funding for K-12 schools. There will only be 2 things that change: lessees will no longer have the power to restrict access to public land, and the public land owners will be able to access ALL of the State Trust land for approved activities. Please PASS the HB 1175 and make sure that this public land, owned by the public, truly remains public.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kelly Hale
Minot, ND

