

March 5, 2023

Testimony by Jayce Doan on behalf of the NDSU Central Grasslands Research Extension Center for HB 1020: Senate Appropriations Committee

Good morning Chair Wanzek and Senate Appropriations-Government Operations Committee. My name is Jayce Doan, an advisory board member on the Central Grasslands Research and Extension Center and I am present today to testify on their behalf.

I am a fifth-generation rancher on my family's ranch in south central North Dakota where we raise cattle and buffalo. We try to do this with a holistic and regenerative approach with the end goal of leaving our natural resources in a better state than we received them.

I have been on the advisory board for 3 years, just now starting my second term. I wanted to be involved with Central Grasslands because as a young producer, I know the value research can have on farmer's and rancher's operations. If we don't innovate and adapt in agriculture, generational farms and ranches will be a thing of the past. In North Dakota, we have a strong livestock industry. But more and more grasslands are being converted to row crops. Roughly 25% of native grass remains in ND, with that number decreasing every year. The Central Grasslands Research and Extension Center is vital to helping ranchers increase their bottom line and make sure the livestock industry thrives in ND.

Personally, we are very committed to conservation on our ranch. I'm very satisfied at the trials and approaches the Research Station has taken to find ways to bring our soil health back to a level to where we, as producers, aren't raping the soil and degrading it year after year. We want to be as profitable as possible in the livestock industry, and that is more than possible to do while working in sync with nature, the land, and the livestock. Central Grasslands has provided valuable information for producers to do so.

The number 1 largest cost for livestock producers on the Northern Plains is winter feed costs. The Research Station has done great work in showing different ways of winter grazing vs. supplemental feeding all winter. Central Grasslands has compared grazing range, cover crops, crop stubble, swathed windrows, bale grazing, to fed hay, silage, corn, etc. Without a research station to conduct these experiments, producers would be very unwilling to change the way they operate, not wanting to be a guinea pig and put their own ranch at risk.

Our ranch was one of six operations to partner with Central Grasslands over the last few years in a SARE study to compare different grazing intensity impacts on fall forage. This shows Central Grasslands willingness to partner with producers when possible and utilize resources in a very conservative manner.

Thank you again Senate Appropriations-Government Operations Committee for the opportunity to testify, and thank you for your continued support of the Central Grasslands Research and Extension Center.

Jayce Doan

Central Grasslands Research and Extension Center Advisory Board Member