



**Testimony of Dana Hager
Economic Development Association of North Dakota
In Support of HB 1014
March 1, 2023**

Chair Bekkedahl and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

I am Dana Hager from the Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND), and I would like to express our support for HB 1014, which includes the appropriation for the Bank of North Dakota and the North Dakota Housing Finance Agency.

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 new wealth creation throughout North Dakota to develop more vibrant and efficient communities and improve quality of life.

Bank of North Dakota

BND programs are important to and widely used by economic developers across the state. Supporting PACE and Flex PACE programs consistently arises as one of our developers' top legislative priorities and the tools they use in their communities. PACE and Flex PACE provide flexibility for businesses and development agencies to support new and growing businesses in a fiscally safe manner in rural and urban North Dakota. Speak to any local developer in the state, and you will hear various stories about the program's impact.

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency

Affordable housing continues to be a priority for expanding North Dakota's businesses and communities in all areas of North Dakota. The Housing Incentive Fund (HIF) is a proven financing tool for developing affordable multi-family housing for essential service workers, main street employees, fixed-income households, and older adults.

EDND would like to express support for additional funding for HIF to help rural communities struggling to attract businesses and solve workforce and housing issues. Consideration of \$50 million will help this program reach its potential.

EDND understands the difficult decisions necessary to determine the state's future, and we appreciate your thoughtfulness in managing this responsibility. I urge the committee's support of PACE, Flex Pace and HIF within HB 1014. Thank you.