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March 13, 2023

HB # 1166 (3/16/2022 Hearing – 10:15 A.M.)

Dear Chair Luick and Honorable Members of the Senate Agriculture & Veterans Affairs Committee:

The Mountrail County Commission is respectfully requesting you to support a **“DO NOT PASS”** on House Bill #1166 relating to state funding requirements for county weather modification operations.

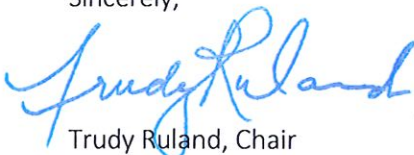
Mountrail County Weather Modification has been in operation since 1970 with the support of State, County and local tax dollars. The bill proposed is not about whether the Mountrail County Commission is in support or not in support of the continuance of weather modification operations, it is about proposed verbiage to eliminate funding from the State for weather modification operations. It appears the State wants counties to carry out and fully fund the objections and purposes of the weather modification program as outlined under Chapter 61.04.1 of the North Dakota Century Code. Participating counties already fund 66% of this “joint” program.

Please take the time to fully read 61-04.1-01 and 61-04.1-02 of the NDCC laying out benefits and purpose of the weather modification program and the fact that the state encourages research and development of this program. It is difficult to meet these goals without participation from the State. When the bill was first introduced, bordering counties wanted “control” as to whether or not weather modification operations exist in a participating county by making State funding dependent on their county’s approval. The bill as amended just flat out eliminates the use of state funds for weather modification operations. This is merely a political and control issue trying to eliminate the program.

Let the voice of the people speak; do not take the rights away from the residents of one county that have elected to participate in weather modification operations. This bill will potentially eliminate weather modification operations state-wide. Also, please consider the significant negative economic impact to not only the producer but also the businesses that benefit from weather modification operations. The elimination would also negatively impact the internship program with the University of North Dakota aviation and meteorology program.

Your consideration and support for a **“DO NOT PASS”** on House Bill #1166 is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Trudy Ruland, Chair

Mountrail County Board of Commissioners

E-mail:

District #2 & #4 Senators

ND Senate Agriculture & Veterans Affairs Committee

Williams, McKenzie & Bowman Boards of County Commissioners

Aaron Skarsgard, Chair Mountrail County Weather Modification

Aaron Birst, Director of NDACo