

Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee,

My name is Victor Seppi and I am opposed to SB 2134. I live in Alsen with my wife and 3 young sons where I run a family bee business with my brothers which, Lord willing, I will be able to pass it down to my sons. Our family has called North Dakota home for 4 years and our bees have been pollinating our state since 2015 with them now spending 8 months of the year here.

SB 2134 would not only have devastating effect on my business, but on the farmers as well. Out of 30 bee locations, the drops we use each year, nearly one third would be considered in violation of this bill. Also note that where the bees are located is determined by the owner/farmer first and then secondarily to aid in our access to tend the hives.-

It would also ban the use of our shop for winter storage of bees and honey extraction because it is within ¼ of state highway and county road. This is a huge asset that we have invested greatly into. I would basically no longer be able to have a business here

This bill also infringes on the rights of property owners, telling them where they can or cannot put bees on their land. Primarily, we ask farmers for locations to put our bees but we have many good friends with hives on their property that love having the bees on there. This would intrude upon their rights as land owners to determine what they can and can't do on their own property. My business also owns several pieces of land that we have bought through the years to live on, and we put our bees currently. This bill would cause us to not be able to use our own land for our family business.

If SB2134 were to pass it would also have a financial impact on the state. The fact that each year brings new people in (even on a temporary basis) brings the benefit of local levels having an increase in revenue which is felt statewide. Passing this bill would have a cumulatively negative effect on the revenues, both tax and otherwise, into North Dakota in a cascading manner: first, the farmers would have reduced crop yield due to lower pollination. Second, both permanent and temporary work related to bees with their employees across the state would be reduced dramatically. Finally, even seeming small byproducts such as honey, wax, etc would see shortages and/or increases in cost on top of the already growing inflation our population is facing. Because we are an agricultural state, this bill's requirements would be no different than asking farmers to no longer drive their tractors on the roadways because people do not like having to drive slowly behind them or having to go around them.

I have put my roots down in North Dakota with my wife and children and have a deep desire to stay. This is my home and I love what I do. Please don't make me leave this great state. Please vote NO on SB2134

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Victor Seppi