

**Testimony of  
Deana Wiese, Executive Director  
North Dakota Ethanol Council  
In Support of SB 2259  
January 26, 2023**

Chairman Luick and members of the Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee,

For the record, my name is Deana Wiese, and I am here today as the executive director of the North Dakota Ethanol Council in support of SB 2259, which caps the audit cost for agriculture commodity groups.

The North Dakota Ethanol Council (Council) was established in 2009 by the North Dakota State Legislature to fund research, education programs, promotion, and market development efforts. The structure of the Council was modeled off those of other state agricultural check-off organizations. It is funded by the first ethanol check-off program in the nation with each plant contributing three one-hundredths of one cent per gallon of ethanol produced. The Council has an annual budget of roughly \$150,000-\$200,000, which makes it one of the smallest commodity councils based on funding.

The Council appreciates the work done by the bill sponsor and the State Auditor to bring this bill forward for discussion. The cap amount can be debated given the diverse budgets and activities of each commodity. While I don't have any immediate suggestions, I would be happy to be in on those discussions. However, more importantly, I would like to reference line 17 of the bill that establishes the agricultural commodity groups '**established in title 4.1**' as those included in the intent of the bill. There are several listings of agriculture commodity groups within the agriculture title 4.1. Given this, I would respectfully recommend specifying the **agriculture commodity promotion groups in [4.1-44-04](#)**, which are the ag commodity groups that must report to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees during each legislative assembly.

With this specification, the North Dakota Ethanol Council supports SB 2259. I'd be happy to answer any questions.