



**Testimony of Brenda Elmer, executive director**

**North Dakota Corn Growers Association**

**In SUPPORT of SB 2373**

**February 3, 2023**

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

Thank you for allowing me to share our support of Senate Bill 2373. For the record, my name is Brenda Elmer, and I am the executive director of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association (NDCGA), which is the voice of the more than 13,000 corn growers across the state at the grass roots level for issues that impact corn producers.

In December, Governor Burgum joined NDSU at the Capitol to unveil a first of its kind comprehensive study of the economic contribution of agriculture in the state. For the year 2020, agriculture contributed nearly \$31 billion to the economy and more than 110,000 jobs. The impact of agriculture was much more than we imagined and the state of ag in North Dakota is promising.

SB 2373, allows counties that are friendly to livestock development to be recognized by the Agriculture Commissioner to help assist efforts to develop, maintain, or expand livestock sectors within the counties of North Dakota. This is a positive step in self-identifying counties that are 'open for business' within the state and help those looking to expand or locate livestock operations within the counties. But also, a start to changing the culture in North Dakota to demonstrate that animal agriculture isn't the odiferous, messy operation of generations ago. That livestock in one's county can mean having good neighbors that brings economic development, value-added agriculture, and many other benefits.

This bill would move North Dakota in a positive direction towards expanding agricultural development which in turn aids producers of corn and other commodities in building valuable markets. We urge your support of SB 2373. Thank you for your time today and your consideration to vote DO PASS on SB 2373.