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**Testimony of  
Matt Perdue  
North Dakota Farmers Union  
Before the  
House Agriculture Committee  
February 3, 2023**

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Chairman Luick and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2373. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am testifying on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union's (NDFU) members.

NDFU supports SB 2373, which would establish a new "Livestock Friendly County (LFC)" program in North Dakota. The LFC designation provides a framework for local discussions about livestock development. The designation also signals to livestock producers that the county supports livestock development, giving farmers and ranchers the confidence to make long-term decisions about investing in the future of their operations.

The LFC program is a voluntary, opt-in designation. A county is eligible for the designation only after the board of county commissioners has adopted and enacted a resolution expressing interest in developing, maintaining, or expanding livestock production and processing. The bill also requires counties who wish to pursue the designation to collaborate with other political subdivisions in the county. We believe collaboration among political subdivisions is critical to building healthier local conversations about livestock development.

SB 2373 is part of a suite of bills aimed at supporting locally led livestock development. HB 1437 would establish regional livestock planning grants, another voluntary process that would help townships update zoning ordinances and provide rural development site analysis. The site analysis from HB 1437 is referenced as a requirement for the LFC designation in Section 1, Paragraph 2d. HB 1148 would establish an agriculture infrastructure fund to support infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate value-added agriculture developments. Collectively, these bills provide important new resources for counties interested in supporting livestock development.

The LFC program is modeled after an existing program in Nebraska. Currently, 51 counties in Nebraska carry the LFC designation.

We respectfully request a "Do Pass" recommendation on SB 2373. Thank you for your consideration. I will stand for any questions.