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Good morning, Chairman Patten and members of the committee, thank you for taking my testimony into consideration today.

I am a lifelong North Dakotan. While hunting was a big part of my childhood, at the ripe old age of 35, I finally wrapped up my first full archery season, securing a nice 5 x 5 off my parents' land in 2F1 in September. I am lucky to have had a very successful first run, and I recognize that I had several tools at my disposal that many first-time archery hunters in our state don't have, including plentiful land along the Sheyenne River Valley, a partner with vast hunting expertise, and the ability to bait.

I spent an incredible amount of time from the spring of 2022 to the fall of 2022 getting ready for archery season. I acquired a bow and associated archery implements; spent time learning to shoot and estimate yardage; set up five tree stands and one tower stand; installed and monitored Tactacams; planned out and spent time hauling bait; and made a plan for which buck I wanted to shoot.

As all of you know, along with an investment of time came an investment of money. Based on receipts and a listing of debit card transactions, I am estimating that between equipment, clothing, bait, fuel, food, and taxidermy costs, I spent just north of \$8,000 to get myself set up this archery season for future seasons. Now, this year being my first year, I know my **hard** costs were especially high because of the capital expenses of a bow, tree stands, and cameras. I had some "catch up" to do. But my **potential annual** costs were not out of the ordinary in comparison to costs published by the North Dakota Game & Fish. According to the North Dakota Game & Fish *Hunter & Angler Spending Report of 2017/2018*, resident archery hunters spent, on average, approximately \$969.12 per season.

This equates to a primary spend per season by the total number of resident licensed hunters, which was 26,114 in 2017/2018, to \$25,307,600. ***Please note, this is direct-spend, not secondary economic impact.***

Many on the committee may feel like this is an impressive number, and you're right. However, since baiting has been restricted across North Dakota, the amount of direct-spend by resident licensed archers is actually down 27.4% based on the

economic reports published by Game & Fish. In 2017/2018, baiting was banned in 20 of 38 units. Based upon the same economic impact report from the Game & Fish, the average spend of resident licensed archers in North Dakota in 2011/2012 was \$1,335.54. In 2011/2012, baiting was banned in 1 of 38 units. If that average spend would have remained consistent from 2011/2012 to 2017/2018 with an assumed same or similar amount of licensed resident archers, the total direct-spend impact would have been \$34,876,292. **That is a difference of nearly \$10 million.**

While the decline in average spend per archer cannot be fully attributed to the restrictions on baiting across the state, one can assume a correlation. More recent numbers are not yet available, as it appears the Game & Fish only collects and publishes this data approximately every 5 years. Yet, if we assume a similar decline based on baiting restriction patterns of 27.4% and a similar amount of licensed resident archers, restrictions on baiting may bring the total direct-spend in North Dakota to \$18,373,317. **A nearly \$17 million potential difference from pre-banning of baiting numbers.**

You will hear from the Game & Fish that license sales for archery in North Dakota have increased by 3,000, which includes non-resident archery tags, between 2016 and 2021. Although this is an excellent statistic for the archery sector, it doesn't nullify the negative correlation of baiting bans - it simply indicates that - during a time period where North Dakota saw an unprecedented growth of the state's population - approximately 90,000 people - we happened to pick up additional hunters.

As I close today, I ask for your support of HB 1151 to not only maintain the viability of North Dakota's archery hunting economy but also to support the magnification of other recent state investments, like investments in workforce recruitment and retention by the Legislature, and, most recently, investments by the Wonder Fund North Dakota, a North Dakota Development Fund investment program, in Land Trust, as an online land sharing marketplace connecting landowners with outdoor enthusiasts, designed to create income for landowners and drive economic development in rural communities. Allowing for the continued banning of baiting in units across the state may cut this most recent investment of taxpayer dollars by hardworking North Dakotans off at the knees if resident and non-resident archers are not able to access baiting as a tool for hunting success.

Thank you. I will now stand for any questions.

Summary of Archery Figures in Testimony

Year	Units Banned	Reported Per Season Spend	Number of Licensed Resident Hunters	Total Annual Spend All Archers
2011/2012	1 of 38	\$1,335.54	26,114*	\$34,876,292
2017/2018	20 of 38	\$969.12	26,114	\$25,307,600
2024/2025**	38 of 38	\$703.58	26,114*	\$18,373,317

*Because exact numbers for licensed resident hunters are not published or available, the known number of hunters for the year in which the data was collected was utilized for all estimates (26,114).

**Numbers for 2024/2025 are extrapolated based upon an assumption that baiting could be banned statewide, which could result in another 27.4% per archer decrease in reported per season spend.

Firearm (Rifle) Deer Resident Hunter Numbers for Comparison

Year	Reported Per Season Spend	Number of Licensed Resident Hunters	Total Annual Spend All Rifle Hunters
2011/2012	\$643.04	40,904*	\$26,302,908
2017/2018	\$657.07	40,904	\$26,876,791

*Because exact numbers for licensed resident hunters are not published or available, the known number of hunters for the year in which the data was collected was utilized for all estimates (40,904).

Report Referenced & Utilized for Figures: [ND Game & Fish Hunter & Angler Spending Report \(2017/2018\)](#)