

Chairman Patten and committee members,

I'm Thomas Wheeler, Fourth generation Farmer at Ray, ND. My family lives on the homestead my Great Grand parents started in 1902. I am not representing any association or any other entity. I am not only here representing myself but the many, many surface owners who share my view on these issues. Please vote NO on HB 1510. Some companies are running over surface owners now. HB 1510 will make it easier for more landowners to get run over especially those without the means to fight back.

I have examples of what can and does happen now with the current law in place. The Williston Research and Extension center is west of Williston right along highway 2. It is part of the North Dakota State University system and thus State Of North Dakota property. An oil company wanted to put an oil well pad on WREC property along highway 2. WREC did not want to lose any acreage. WREC can't replace any acres lost. Industry didn't care. Sometimes industry will move a pad to the other side of a road. In this case they couldn't as the land on that side was being developed, being sold by the square foot. Industry made an offer for the well site property. The offer was the same as offers being made for pads ten miles out in the country. No adjustment for research property. No adjustment for land right next to property selling by the square foot. Industry gave the twenty-day notice and drilled the well. Zero compensation. Some months later the oil company filed bankruptcy. A different company owns the well now. To date WREC has not received any compensation. Looks like it will be Zero compensation for forever to Williston Research and Extension Center. Industry wins again.

A classmate of mine since first grade has some property inside the extraterritorial line of Williston. An oil company wanted a well pad on his land. My classmate passed away and his daughter has the property now. Again this oil company only offered the same as they would offer out in the country , away from Williston. There are commercial buildings right across the property line south of wellsite and my friends had sold some property on the eastside of wellsite to developers. Oil company resisted fair location compensation. Oil company did give 20-day notice with a small offer May of 2022. As of last week, they had still not settled but no dirt has been moved. Industry hasn't won yet, but are definitely in charge of the direction this issue takes.

I feel lucky. Hess has the oil lease on all the land we own and most of the farm land we rent. They have been fair to deal with and have addressed issues promptly. We have recently rented some new land that has wells on it operated by Krakken. Krakken also has been very good about any issues that pop up.

Yes, there are a number of good companies but there are always the scoundrels that care zero about the surface owner or the Williston Research and Extension Center or the state of North Dakota. They only want to take every dollar they can out of our great state. Monkey see, monkey do. When do the "good" companies look at this and say Wow, we could save \$50,000 per pad on 39 pads is almost \$2 million. History shows oil industry is driven by profits. Nothing wrong with profits. Every industry needs to make a profit. But when profits come at the expense of North Dakota residents, that is wrong!

Value of property is usually determined when there is a willing buyer and a willing seller. Sometimes the buyer is willing to run over the unwilling seller.

I am pro oil production. I am pro pipelines. I get it. Our North Dakota is in good financial shape because of our oil. Estimates of \$1.2 billion have been mentioned for reclamation. Where do those funds come from?

Most bills brought to North Dakota legislature have a benefit to people of North Dakota. HB 1510 only benefits those in the oil industry. We need a bill that prevents taking of property without having to use the court system.

Please vote no on HB1510.

Thanks for your time.

Thomas Wheeler

Farmer and surface owner in oil country

Will try to answer any questions