

Testimony of Keith Rychner
in opposition to
HOUSE BILL NO. 1510
Senate Energy and Natural Resources
March 30, 2023

Chairman Patten and members of the committee, my name is Keith Rychner and I am a rancher in Dunn County. I am writing to ask you to vote against HB 1510, which is a direct attack on landowner rights in North Dakota.

We are currently in the middle of a legal battle with a major oilfield company over surface damages. Their original offer was much lower than competing companies in our same area for the same thing. They didn't want to negotiate, so the only options we had at that point were to roll over or sue them. We sued.

1510 would make that impossible as a couple years of lawyer's fees are going to be far higher than any settlement. That's taking away the only tool you have to negotiate against an implied easement. I believe the real reason for this legislation is to stop litigation under the surface damage act.

I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS on HB 1510 and stand with the landowners.

Thank you,
Keith Rychner