

Uta Pruess
Herne, Germany

February 2, 2023

RE: SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4014

Dear members of the 68th Legislative Assembly of North Dakota,

Please, accept the below as my testimony IN FAVOR of SCR4014 regarding the herd of wild horses that currently lives in Theodore Roosevelt National Park in Medora, ND.

For almost 20 years, I have visited my sister in Fargo. Together, we have visited Theodore Roosevelt National Park multiple times, the last years annually.

As a German, I have learned a lot about American history in Medora, in particular about life on the prairie.

As a German, I only knew the wide land of the Midwest from movies such as "Dances with Wolves" or "Little house on the Prairie". That people really lived and continue to live this way was something I could not imagine.

The post office in Medora is an impressive example. People came from far away to pick up their mail. Likewise, people in North Dakota traveled much larger distances to go to church than I am accustomed to. For this, people needed HORSES, just like the first settlers that started on the east coast on their way to the west.

The Success Story of America would not have been possible without HORSES. They were needed much more than us Europeans would know.

HORSES are an integral part of the identity of Medora. I know of no other town or place in the US (and many Americans claim that I have seen more of the US than they have), where national awareness is of the importance as it is here.

I was deeply impressed by every one of the musical performances in the amphi theatre. Every time, a part of American history is told. Every time with HORSES. Here in Medora, children already learn to be proud to be American. A national awareness that us Germans (at least of my generation) do not know, unfortunately.

Should there be no more HORSES in TRNP, the park will lose its identity. The history can no longer be experienced in that case. This would be a massive loss to Medora, North Dakota, and the US.

What the HORSES in the park mean to me is infinite. Together with the bison, they are for me the most important living beings for human life on the prairie. Keep watching them is pure inspiration in an increasingly faster time. I can understand Theodore Roosevelt well, who collected many inspirations for his later time as President of the United States in this part of North Dakota.

The park in its current form, certainly with the HORSES, needs to be protected, to maintain a small paradise in a fragile world.

Sincerely and respectfully
Uta Pruess