

March 22, 2023

Senate Transportation Committee  
Chairman Clemens  
1682 Oakwood Drive  
West Fargo, ND 58078-4315  
dclemens@ndlegis.gov

From: Kenley Nebeker,  
Executive Director of TrainND Northwest, Williston State College  
Chairman of the Board, North Dakota Unmanned Autonomous Systems Council

Subject: Support for UAS Funding Bill HB 1519

To the Honorable Chairman Clemens and Committee Members,

My name is Kenley Nebeker. I am the Executive Director of TrainND Northwest in Williston North Dakota. It is also my privilege to serve as the Chairman of the Board for the North Dakota Unmanned Autonomous Systems Council. I am writing in support of HB 1519.

As you are aware HB 1519 provides for appropriations to multiple North Dakota agencies allowing for funding to directly related industry partners to promote widescale adoption and use of UAS in North Dakota. This bill provides funding to allow industry partners in these key areas to adopt UAS into their day-to-day operations whether through purchase of their own UAS or the use of a UAS service provider.

Additionally, there are funds contained in this bill for creating programs that will educate a workforce meant to support the widescale adoption of drones in North Dakota. Included in this bill are funds for workforce training focused on building a data analysis and processing program. The establishment of this program is key for widescale adoption. In multiple interviews with industry the common theme has been that there are 2 main hurdles to widescale adoption by industry at this time:

1. BVLOS flight
  - a. Being overcome by the establishment of Vantis
2. Data Analysis and processing
  - a. This bill would provide funding to establish a program to build a workforce ready to leverage the technology that already exists to take the massive amounts of data collected by UAS and process the data into a usable product for the end user.

The importance of the educational component of this bill cannot be understated.

Human nature often leads us to continue doing things the way traditionally have, no matter how inefficient, until something forces us to change, or someone shows us a better way. The brilliance of this bill is that through the funding provided, multiple companies will be able to prove the use cases of UAS in their operations and show other industry partners within the state how things can be done better using UAS.

The potential uses of UAS in every industry, from soil to oil, continue to expand and the opportunity in the UAS sector is set to grow exponentially. This infusion of funds will help companies give this new technology a chance to show how it can grow efficiencies, save lives, expand wealth, and even fundamentally change workflows for the better.



In conclusion this bill gives North Dakota the chance to take another step in leading way in the UAS industry throughout the nation by providing a pathway for widescale adoption of UAS throughout the state and in multiple industries.

I ask for a do pass vote and welcome any questions you may have.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kenley Nebeker".

Kenley Nebeker  
Executive Director  
TrainND Northwest

Chairman of the Board  
North Dakota Unmanned Automated Systems Council  
kenley.nebeker@willistonstate.edu  
(701) 713-3780