



**Testimony of Dana Hager
Economic Development Association of North Dakota
In Support of HB 1519
March 23, 2023**

Chairman Clemens and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

My name is Dana Hager, executive director of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND). I am here to express support for HB 1519 to provide appropriations for Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) grants.

EDND represents more than 80 state economic development organizations on the front line of economic development efforts throughout North Dakota. EDND members understand that our state's long-term future depends upon expanded economic diversification and supporting innovation that will bring new wealth to the state.

North Dakota is a leader in the UAS industry. Keeping a solid collaboration between government and industry will drive the UAS vision to the next level. HB 1519 and appropriations to the departments of Transportation, Health and Human Services, Career and Technical Education, Agriculture, and the Industrial Commission will provide funding for continued UAS development and infrastructure to serve our communities and business.

North Dakota is thriving and must continue to invest in growing its UAS networks and operations to support our state's diversity and growth. Thank you for your time, and we urge a Do Pass on HB 1519.