Chairman Beltz, Members of the House Ag Committee

Good morning, For the record my name is August Heupel. I am from Medina, North Dakota. I am a rancher and currently serve as Vice President of I-BAND.

I come to you today in support of HB 1207. Thank you for considering this bill as I feel this is a very important issue. I recognize that HB 1436, heard last session, while I feel the intent was good had some flaws. This 2.0 version in HB 1207 addresses those concerns and I feel it is a bill we all can be confident in.

I recognize that at present time there isn't consensus between the two state cattle groups. Our respective organizations met January 9th to discuss our differences with the bill. Although we didn't reach an agreement, I thank and respect the individuals that attended the meeting. It was a good respectful meeting, and I feel it is something we should do more often in the future. To sit down and have good discussion.

This is a subject I feel strongly about, which is why I am here today. This bill gives ALL producers, affiliated or not affiliated with any group in the state, a voice on who can best represent them on the beef commission. Its transparent, fair, and most of all is a process that is one of the most fundamental values of being an American, Voting! This bill truly will fix this issue out in the country. Being elected to my role in the organization I am representing along with all of you sitting here today voted in to represent your districts, I think we all can agree and understand how vital and important voting on our representation is!

In closing, this bill isn't about me or the organization I represent or any other organization for that matter. It is simply about the producer. I am a 5th Generation rancher. My 4 young children, lord willing with be the 6th generation running our place. This bill is for the future. Everything we do here today is about a better tomorrow. In my opinion this bill ensures a better tomorrow. A better tomorrow for our children and grandchildren. Along with my two year old little girl who cant help but scream COWS! Anytime she sees them. Thank you.