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## **House Agriculture Committee**

### **Hearing for HB 1509**

**January 30, 2025**

### **Testimony of Annika Plummer, North Dakota Ag Coalition**

Chairman Beltz and members of the committee, my name is Annika Plummer. I am here today as the Administrator of the North Dakota Ag Coalition. The Ag Coalition has provided a unified voice for North Dakota agricultural interests for more than 40 years. Today, we represent 49 statewide organizations and associations that represent specific commodities or have a direct interest in agriculture. Our members seek to enhance North Dakota's agriculture industry through membership in the Ag Coalition.

The Ag Coalition considers policy action items, brought forward by our members, seriously. It takes a policy position on a limited number of issues every session and only on those that have a significant impact on North Dakota's agriculture industry. The North Dakota Ag Coalition opposes House Bill 1509, a bill that intends to change the refund process for the oilseed council.

The current refund process allows a producer to submit a written request for a refund application within 60 days after the date of assessment or final settlement, complete the refund application, and return it, along with a record of the assessment collected, within 90 days after the date of the assessment or final settlement. The oilseed council is then tasked with refunding the net amount of the assessment. These terms were chosen with great care 15 years ago after a lengthy and engaging input session where uniform language was adopted for applying for a refund.

The North Dakota Ag Coalition and its members are concerned about the changes to the refund process and how it would affect budgeting and financial stability for the oilseed council. The oilseed council, with the current process, can prepare for potential refunds and accordingly budget throughout the year. If this bill passes, giving a one-year window for producers to complete the refund process, it could negatively impact the oilseed council's ability to budget and balance its accounts.

In addition, the North Dakota Ag Coalition is concerned that if the refund process for the oilseed council changes, it could impact other checkoff organizations and organizations our members support. The research and promotion that checkoffs provide arms North Dakota

producers with the knowledge and tools to remain competitive in the world market. Producers are not asking for a change in the refund process. This bill is a quick response to a process that was carefully considered and adopted with considerable input. The system currently works, and a vast majority of producers choose to invest.

As you know, North Dakota producers have been – and will continue to be – the driving force in the future of North Dakota’s number one industry and the state’s economy. It is essential that we listen to them and carefully consider any changes to processes that were developed thoughtfully and deliberately.

The North Dakota Ag Coalition encourages your opposition to HB 1509. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

# North Dakota AG COALITION

*Providing a unified voice on behalf of North Dakota agricultural interests.*

The North Dakota Ag Coalition is a nonpartisan federation of 50 organizations representing specific commodities and/or associations with a direct interest in agriculture, for the specific purpose of addressing issues that affect North Dakota agriculture. Organized in April 1982, the North Dakota Ag Coalition has been successful in providing a unified voice on behalf of North Dakota agricultural interests for more than 40 years.

## Issues of Interest:

- Agriculture research and extension ● Value-added agriculture
- Renewable fuels ● Commodity check-offs
- Rural infrastructure ● Conservation

## Executive Committee:

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# The North Dakota Ag Coalition and its member organizations look forward to working with you during the 2025 Legislative Session

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## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP:

I-BAND  
Milk Producers Association of ND Inc.  
Minn-Dak Farmers Co-op  
ND Ag Aviation Association  
ND Ag Consultants  
ND Agricultural Association  
ND Agri-Women  
ND Barley Council  
ND Beekeepers Association  
ND Corn Growers Association  
ND Corn Utilization Council  
ND Dry Bean Council  
ND Elk Growers  
ND Ethanol Producers Association  
ND Farm Credit Council  
ND Farmers Union  
ND Grain Dealers Association  
ND Grain Growers Association  
ND Irrigation Association  
ND Lamb and Wool Producers Association  
ND Oilseed Council  
ND Pork Council  
ND Soybean Growers Association  
ND State Soil Conservation Committee  
ND Stockmen's Association  
ND Wheat Commission  
Northern Canola Growers Association  
Northern Pulse Growers Association  
Northland Potato Growers Association  
Northwest Landowners Association  
Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers  
US Durum Growers Association  
Winery Association of North Dakota

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Ellingson Companies  
Garrison Diversion Conservancy District  
Grand Farm Research and Education Initiative  
ND Association of Agricultural Educators  
ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts  
ND Beef Commission  
ND Department of Agriculture  
ND Department of Water Resources  
ND Farm Management Education Association  
ND Grazing Lands Coalition  
ND Rural Water Systems Association  
ND Soybean Council  
ND State Seed Commission  
ND Water Resource Districts Association  
NDSU Agriculture  
Northern Crops Institute  
Red River Retention Authority

