

Chairman Beltz and members of the House Agriculture Committee

My name is Brad Brummond, I am currently the Fair Manager for the Walsh County Fair. I have been the fair manager for around 20 years and served as the Walsh County Agent for 31 years. I give up just about every Saturday in the winter to coach 4-H land and agronomy teams, as I believe in 4-H and the positive effect it has on their development into responsible adults. I am a product of Sargent County 4-H. The fair is the highlight of the 4-H year. My responsibility as Fair Manager is to advise and assist our president and get the buildings ready for the fair. I think I can rightly claim to know more about our fair buildings than any living individual.

We just recently commissioned an engineering report on the status of our fair buildings. The report on our fair arena, where we show livestock, was less than we had hoped for. We have a building that needs extensive repairs to the point that it is most likely more cost effective to push it in and start over on the existing concrete slab. The estimated cost is between one and a half million dollars and two million dollars. I believe with the price of material these days we are looking at the two-million-dollar number.

We have a fair that has been scheduled for the third week in October over the old teachers convention for over 30 years and our schools respect that Thursday and Friday and schedule it off so their students can participate in our fair. You can well imagine the variety of weather I have experienced over my 31 years at the fair. We have had 60-degree weather, and we have had a full scale blizzard a week before the fair. We can't just set up tents and pens and do it outside unless we abandon our dates.

Our County is currently struggling to replace a jail that has to also be replaced so I don't think there is going to be a lot of money to help us with our building. It is a sad commentary on the state of our society that we must fund jails over fairs. The best way to fix the need for jails is to develop strong resilient adults and I can think of no better way than supporting a program like 4-H and fairs. I have been involved in Fairs and 4-H my whole life and if I could volunteer for another 50 years the debt would never be paid to those who gave me the opportunity fairs and 4-H gave me. My children all went through 4-H and the Walsh County Fair, and they are going to be the medical professionals our state so desperately needs.

I would like to urge you to support HB 1591.

Brad Brummond

Private Citizen and Walsh County Fair Manager