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Chairman Beltz and Members of the House Agriculture Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 1591. I am here to express my strong endorsement for the appropriation of funds through this bill, which will allow for the improvement of the Stutsman County fairgrounds and infrastructure.

The Stutsman County Fair has a long history as an important cultural and economic pillar for our community. For years, our fair has served as a venue where agricultural producers, 4-H members, local families, and visitors come together to celebrate our state's agricultural heritage. We have seen firsthand the positive impacts it has on our local economy, and the fair remains a key event for promoting North Dakota's agriculture in Stutsman County.

However, like many county fairs across the state, we are facing infrastructure needs. Our facilities require significant upgrades and repairs to continue providing the high-quality, safe, and accessible environment that our fairgoers and exhibitors deserve. With the passage of House Bill 1591, the Stutsman County Fair would be able to access the vital funding necessary to address these needs, such as improving exhibition halls, upgrading restroom facilities, and enhancing our overall event infrastructure to better accommodate the growing demands of our fair and community.

Agriculture plays an essential role in our fair, showcasing North Dakota's agricultural diversity. From livestock competitions to crop displays and 4-H achievements, the Stutsman County Fair directly connects our community to the vital work happening on farms and ranches across our region. The improvements made through this grant would not only ensure the fair continues to thrive but would also allow us to better support future generations of agricultural leaders and innovators.

Beyond the importance of agriculture, the fair has a significant economic and social impact on Stutsman County. The fair brings thousands of attendees to our community each year, supporting local businesses, filling hotel rooms, and generating revenue for restaurants, gas stations, and retail shops.

State investment in this infrastructure would leverage private funds already committed to improving our facilities. The funding authorized in House Bill 1591 would help ensure that the Stutsman County fairgrounds can continue to serve as a beacon for agricultural education and community pride for years to come.

The support for our fair extends beyond financial contributions—it is built on the hard work of countless volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to making the event a success. We have a strong and dedicated team of community members who believe in the value of the Stutsman County Fair and are committed to preserving its future.

Finally, I want to underscore the return on investment this funding will provide. Not only will these infrastructure improvements make our fair a safer, more accessible space, but they will also contribute to the continued growth and vitality of Stutsman County and North Dakota as a whole. The benefits of this investment will ripple through our community and beyond, strengthening our agricultural heritage and economy for generations to come.

I respectfully ask this committee to give House Bill 1591 a DO PASS recommendation, ensuring that the Stutsman County Fair, along with many others across the state, can continue to thrive and contribute to the prosperity of our region and state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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