



Red River Valley Fair

West Fargo, ND
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January 29, 2025

Chairman Beltz and Members of the House Agriculture Committee

North Dakota Legislative Assembly
919 S 7th Street
Bismarck, ND

Subject: Support for House Bill 1591 – Investing in North Dakota’s County Fairs

Dear Chairman Beltz and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the **Red River Valley Fair** to express our **strong support for House Bill 1591**. As the **CEO of the Red River Valley Fair**, I have witnessed firsthand the **incredible impact that county fairs have on North Dakota communities**, from fostering agricultural education to driving economic growth.

The Impact of the Red River Valley Fair

The Red River Valley Fair is far more than an annual event—it is a **cornerstone of our community, a hub of agricultural learning, and a major economic driver** for the region. Each year, our fairgrounds serve **over 150,000 visitors**, providing them with entertainment, education, and hands-on experiences that celebrate North Dakota’s agricultural heritage.

Beyond the fair itself, our **year-round programming and events contribute significantly to the state’s economy and workforce development**, including:

- **4-H and FFA Participation:** In 2024, we hosted **over 12,100** 4-H and FFA exhibits, giving youth valuable opportunities to engage in livestock showing, educational competitions, and agricultural career exploration.
- **Agriculture Education Center:** Since its renovation, the center has welcomed **multiple field trips for hundreds of students**, providing an interactive learning experience that connects kids and families to North Dakota’s agricultural roots.
- **Leadership & Education Program (LEP):** Participation in this program has grown steadily over the past three years, empowering young leaders and fostering a deeper understanding of the agricultural industry.

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*Red River Valley Fair
Association*

- **Economic Impact:** The Red River Valley Fairgrounds generates an estimated \$150 million in annual economic impact, including revenue from events, spending by out-of-town visitors, and increased business activity across the region.

The Need for Infrastructure Investment

Despite the **overwhelming benefits** that fairs provide, many fairgrounds across North Dakota—including ours—are facing **critical infrastructure challenges**. Aging facilities, increasing operational costs, and the growing demand for educational programming make **state investment in fairgrounds more important than ever**.

House Bill 1591 is an essential first step toward addressing these challenges. While we acknowledge that the current funding level does not fully meet the needs of fairs across the state, **passing this bill will establish a foundation for future investment**, ensuring that fairgrounds remain safe, accessible, and impactful for generations to come.

A Call to Action

On behalf of the **Red River Valley Fair and county fairs across North Dakota**, I urge you to **give House Bill 1591 a DO PASS recommendation**. This legislation is not just an investment in fairgrounds—it is an investment in **agriculture, youth development, economic sustainability, and the overall quality of life for North Dakotans**.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to the future of North Dakota's county fairs. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Cody Cashman'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Cody Cashman
CEO, Red River Valley Fair