

Intro HB 1611 House Agriculture Committee

Chairman Beltz, and members of the House Agriculture Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present this bill before you today. My name is representative Lisa Finley-DeVillie I represent District 4A that is all of Fort Berthold Reservation. As the sponsor of HB 1611, which calls for a legislative management study to examine the risks associated with oil and chemical spills on state highways within the Fort Berthold Reservation. The purpose of this study is to take a closer look at how these spills impact public safety, our roads, and the environment.

The Fort Berthold Reservation is in one of North Dakota's leading oil-producing areas. While this has driven economic growth, it has also increased spill risks that can damage roads, affect water sources, and pose dangers to locals and travelers. This study will be conducted and overseen by the Nueta, Hidatsa, and Sahnish College who will be gathering input with Three Affiliated Tribes Environmental Department, the Department of Environmental Quality, and to get a complete picture and address these issues effectively. I had visited with Department of Environmental Quality who said they could assist with information on what they do off the reservation on the remediation and identifying areas of oil and chemical spill sites. Also visited with Transportation department who will give the right of ways for areas to be studied.

In order to carry out this important work, I request an appropriation of \$100,000 for the funding of this initiative. These resources will enable us to study, assess, and mitigate the risks involved, ensuring that we protect the health of North Dakotans.

We aim to manage these risks responsibly and protect essential infrastructure and resources. I urge your support for this bill and look forward to collaborating on this important matter. Thank you for your consideration.