

**Testimony of
Ryan Gregg
North Dakota Farmers Union
Regarding HCR 3018
House Agriculture Committee
February 13, 2025**

Hello Chairman Beltz and members of the committee,

I am Ryan Gregg, legislative specialist for the North Dakota Farmers Union (NDFU). We strongly support HCR 3018, a comprehensive study of North Dakota's water, wetland, and inundated lands issues.

Our farmer members understand the critical link between agricultural productivity and environmental stewardship. We support protecting both farms and infrastructure from excess water. The study outlined in HCR 3018 may provide vital information and data to explore options to better manage water and inundated land.

NDFU appreciates the measure's approach to review the current multi-layered oversight of wetlands, waterlogged and inundated lands which creates confusion due to a blend of federal, state, and local regulations. The study should identify conflicts, overlaps, and gaps in responsibility with recommendations for streamlining.

Additionally, different jurisdictions apply varied tax treatment and assessment modifiers for inundated lands. The study should analyze current practices and recommend a more equitable approach.

NDFU supports empowering landowners in water management. When dealing with farmed wetlands, primary consideration should be given to the economic impact on production agriculture. We hope the study will identify options for landowners to manage water within the boundaries of their property without regulation or interference.

We think the study should also examine water's impact on road infrastructure, including culverts and bridges, and ensure adequate conveyance standards, balancing flood prevention with agricultural needs.

NDFU believes this study will provide the information necessary for effective, balanced water policies, and we urge the committee to give it a "Do Pass" recommendation. Thank you.