



North Dakota Native Vote
919 S 7th Street
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Bismarck, ND 58504

February 4, 2025

Testimony of Erika Red Tomahawk,
Tribal-State Policy Coordinator North Dakota Native Vote
In Support for HB 1618

Dear Chairman Ruby and members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Erika Red Tomahawk, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of North Dakota Native Vote, an organization founded in 2018 to address the disparities affecting tribal communities in North Dakota. I am also a direct descendant of the Standing Rock Sioux Nation and a graduate of Fort Yates Public School (District 4).

I am here today to express my support for House Bill 1618, which provides essential funding for tribal school infrastructure grants. Many of our tribal schools face significant challenges due to aging buildings and outdated facilities. These conditions make it difficult for students to thrive and receive the high-quality education they deserve.

HB 1618 would allow tribal schools to apply for funding to make necessary infrastructure improvements. The matching funds requirement in the bill ensures that local communities also have a stake in the success of these projects, while helping to maximize the use of state resources.

Investing in the infrastructure of our tribal schools is an investment in the future of North Dakota. All students, regardless of where they live, deserve safe and modern learning environments. This bill will help ensure that tribal schools have the same opportunities to succeed as their peers in other parts of the state.

I urge the committee to give a **“Do Pass” recommendation on House Bill 1618**. This legislation is a vital step in providing equitable educational opportunities for tribal students across North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Erika Red Tomahawk