

Testimony HB 1483
House Finance and Taxation Committee
February 4, 2025

Mr. Chairman Headland and members of the Finance and Taxation committee, my name is Steve Farden. I reside in the small town of Maxbass, North Dakota which is about 35 miles north of Minot with a population of about 80 some people. I am honored to be here today to testify in support of House Bill 1483.

My family has worked in the construction industry in northern and northwestern North Dakota for four generations....in fact, the fourth generation, Lila, is here with us today. It's worth noting that both she and her younger sister have their CDL Commercial Driver's License and work in our business in the oilfields of North Dakota.

Before the Bakken, Maxbass was surrounded by 20% of the producing oil wells in North Dakota. Which meant it was hard not to be involved in the oilfield. We've been in business since the early 1930s and are proud to say we employ 150 of the best people in our area across our three businesses.

The "shallow oilfield" as I call it, is very ingrained in our communities from the service companies to the businesses on main street, to our schools, who all rely on the extra traffic from the oilfield to survive.

Since the plug and abandoned program in the State, several fields are now available to be redrilled. You may have heard we've only got 15% of the oil out of the ground with 85% left to get. With the increased costs of everything, this bill would bring the economics back to help make the decision to drill and invest in our region of the state more favorable.

My Father once said they start drilling out west first then when everyone get it tied up, the real "wild catters" show-up in our areas here to drill which include Ward, Bottineau, and Renville Counties.

On a side note, I see there's a Fiscal Note attached to this bill. The fiscal note will only be true if companies drill and the economic impact then will far outway the cost. What this bill really does for those of us who live and work in the Ward, Bottineau, Renville, and other non-Bakken Counties is ensure the drilling continues which means we all have jobs, businesses, and schools in our area.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I encourage you to give HB 1483 a Do Pass Recommendation and I will address any questions the committee may have.