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Testimony of Carol Peterson

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I am testifying today as the Economic Development Coordinator and a citizen of Milnor, ND to support funding for House Bill 1524, specifically the sustained funding for regional councils in North Dakota for the next two years. Communities in Sargent County appreciate the expertise and resources we receive from our council, Lake Agassiz Regional Council. Rural communities especially need the help of these regional councils in finding resources, access funding, and help us with economic development. Milnor, along with Sargent County has used their services many times and we appreciate the guidance and support we have received. Please fund the regional councils to level the playing field for small communities and give us a chance to survive and thrive - let's take our rural communities from surviving to thriving by giving us the tools we need.

Statewide Impact of Regional Councils (2019-2023)

Metric	Total
Funding applications assisted	1,020
Total funding secured with Regional Council assistance	\$367,751,823
Additional funds leveraged	\$560,832,576
Total investment in North Dakota	\$928,584,398
Jobs created or retained	4,899
Community & economic development plans created	55
Public forums, meetings, and planning sessions	408
Total attendees engaged	5,900

Thank you for your time.