

Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 1581
Before the House Government and Veterans Affairs Public Hearing
February 10, 2025

Members of the Committee:

I am honored to provide testimony in strong support of House Bill No. 1581, which appropriates \$500,000 from the state's general fund to the Department of Commerce for tribal tourism grants during the biennium from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027.

This bill represents an important investment in tribal economic development, cultural preservation, and statewide tourism growth. Tribal tourism is a rapidly expanding sector that brings unique experiences to visitors while creating economic opportunities for tribal communities. The \$500,000 allocation will help strengthen and expand tourism initiatives in key ways:

Economic Growth & Job Creation: By supporting tribal tourism initiatives, this funding will stimulate local businesses, create jobs, and generate revenue for tribal and surrounding communities.

Cultural Preservation & Education: Tourism provides a platform to share and protect Indigenous traditions, languages, and heritage, ensuring that these invaluable cultural assets continue to thrive.

Statewide Tourism Expansion: Investing in tribal tourism enhances North Dakota's broader tourism industry by attracting visitors interested in authentic cultural experiences, outdoor recreation, and historical sites.

Strengthened Tribal-State Partnerships: Providing direct funding to tribal tourism efforts reinforces the state's commitment to working collaboratively with tribal nations, respecting their sovereignty, and fostering mutual economic success.

With this \$500,000 appropriation, House Bill No. 1581 represents not just a financial commitment, but a strategic initiative that will yield long-term benefits for both tribal communities and the state as a whole. I respectfully urge the committee to support this bill and ensure that North Dakota continues to invest in the growth of tribal tourism.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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