



MHA Nation Tourism
Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation – Fort Berthold Indian Reservation
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Testimonial for House Bill No. 1581
February 12, 2025

Honorable Chairman and members of the Committee, for the record:

My name is Kiera Fox, I am the Acting Director of the MHA Nation Tourism Department and the MHA Nation Representative to the North Dakota Native Tourism Alliance Board. The MHA Nation Tourism Department wholeheartedly supports House Bill 1581, which appropriates \$500,000. This provides \$100,000 for the five Tribal Nations in North Dakota for Tribal tourism. This bill is a significant step towards preserving and promoting our rich cultural heritage, while also providing economic opportunities for our Tribal communities and surrounding communities.

Our Tribal Nations have a deep-rooted history and unique traditions that have been passed down through generations. By investing in Tribal tourism, we are not only preserving these invaluable cultural assets but also sharing them with the world. This funding will enable us to develop and maintain essential infrastructure, such as visitor centers, signage, and amenities that enhance the visitor experience. Additionally, it will allow us to create and promote engaging cultural programs, events, and workshops that showcase our heritage in an authentic and meaningful way.

The impact of this bill goes beyond cultural preservation. It will foster economic growth by creating jobs and stimulating local economies within our Tribal Nations. Tour guides, artisans, event organizers, and numerous other roles will benefit from the increased demand generated by tourism. This, in turn, will provide much-needed income and opportunities for our communities, helping to improve the overall quality of life.

Moreover, Tribal tourism fosters greater understanding and appreciation between different cultures. Visitors to our communities will have the opportunity to learn about our history, traditions, and values firsthand. This exchange of knowledge and experiences can lead to stronger relationships and mutual respect, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society.

By supporting HB1581, the state of North Dakota is committing to honor and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of its Indigenous communities. This investment will not only benefit the Tribes but also enhance the state's reputation as a destination that values and respects cultural diversity. I urge the state to recognize the immense value of this bill and the positive impact it will have on our communities and beyond.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kiera Fox
Acting Director
MHA Nation Tourism
NDNTA Board member – MHA Nation Representative