



Chairman Warrey and Members of the House IBL Committee-

The North Dakota UAS Council is in strong support of House Bill 1249, which expands the application of autonomous technologies across state agencies to address critical challenges, improve efficiency, and maintain our state's position as a leader in innovation.

Building on Past Success

During the 2023 legislative session, the North Dakota Legislature funded the Palmer Amaranth UAS program under HB1519. This program successfully utilized uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) to fly and gather imagery, which was instrumental in building an AI model to detect the invasive weed species Palmer Amaranth. This innovative approach highlighted the effectiveness of UAS in solving complex challenges efficiently.

House Bill 1249 extends this proven model to other sectors, providing vital funding for:

- **Agriculture:** Expanding efforts to protect crops and ensure food security by leveraging UAS and AI for statewide invasive species detection.
- **Workforce Development:** Supporting programs like TrainND to prepare workers for autonomous technology jobs, addressing labor shortages and fostering economic growth.
- **Public Safety:** Enabling the use of UAS for search and rescue operations, crime scene reconstruction, and disaster response to improve outcomes and reduce costs.
- **Infrastructure Monitoring:** Enhancing road safety and transportation efficiency by deploying autonomous systems to monitor critical corridors like U.S. Highway 2.

By advancing autonomous technology integration, HB1249 addresses real-world challenges while ensuring North Dakota remains at the forefront of innovation. These investments will improve efficiency, protect critical resources, and equip the workforce with the skills needed for future technologies.

House Bill 1249 is an investment in North Dakota's future, building on past successes and fostering innovation that strengthens our economy, workforce, and public systems. I urge the committee to support this important legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Frank Matus

Chair, North Dakota Unmanned Autonomous Systems Council

