

Chairman Warrey and members of the House Industry Business and Labor Committee,

HB1249 builds upon the successful implementation of HB1519 from the 2023 session. The bill provides appropriations to five agencies (Attorney General, Dept. of Career and Technical Education, Dept. of Health and Human Services, Ag Commissioner, and the Dept. of Transportation) while also providing study and report language to quantify the work done.

The Bill appropriates \$750,000 to these agencies to fund the grant programs for uncrewed aircraft systems, other autonomous systems, processes or technologies, bringing the total amount appropriated to \$3,750,000 from the general fund. The controlling agencies may require the contracted parties to provide one dollar for every four dollars awarded.

The program implemented in HB1519 through the Ag Commissioner was successful in bringing private industry, research institutions, and those in that value chain to identify a palmer amaranth, a highly invasive weed that is plaguing ag producers in the U.S.

Train ND built the first BVLOS program in the country, and students that graduated from that program are currently employed in the state, further demonstrating the success of the previous program.

Representative Jared Hagert D-20