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Testimony of Samantha Brunner
Plant Industries Division Director
House Industry, Business and Labor
Room 327C
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Chairman Warrey and members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee, I am Samantha Brunner, Plant Industries Division Director here on behalf of Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring. I am here today in support of HB 1249, autonomous technology grants.

The 2023 Legislative session created a grant program with \$275,000 available to the Agriculture Commissioner for the use of autonomous technology grants in agricultural industries. With these funds the commissioner awarded a grant to a collective group including The Northern Plains UAS Test Site, Thales, North Dakota State University, Grand Farm, and ISight Drone Services to develop a system to use UAS to detect palmer amaranth in cropping systems. This grant project is currently in progress if successful could create a fast, and reliable way to identify such a problematic weed in cropping systems allowing expedited treatment and targeted control.

Funds from the current bill could be used to support county weed boards in establishing county wide survey for invasive noxious weeds via aircraft, or creation of systems to detect new or threatening weed species. UAS could

simultaneously be used to spot spray affected areas to remove the noxious species.

Chairman Warrey and committee members, thank you for your time. I urge a do pass on HB 1249. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.