



Contact:
Matt Perdue, Lobbyist
mperdue@ndfu.org | 701.641.3303

**Testimony of
Matt Perdue
North Dakota Farmers Union
Regarding HB 1614
House Transportation Committee
February 13, 2025**

Chairman Ruby and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1614. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am testifying on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union's (NDFU) members. NDFU opposes HB 1614.

HB 1614 would prohibit the operation of autonomous trucks on state highways, unless a driver with a commercial driver's license (CDL) is physically present in the truck. We believe this legislation is unnecessary and may prevent innovation that may benefit North Dakota farmers

Farmers are currently struggling with significant labor shortages, especially during the peak harvest season. That labor shortage is particularly severe for trucking, given the declining number of CDL drivers. Demographic trends indicate that labor shortages across our economy are likely to persist for decades. The development of autonomous truck technology could help address that challenge in the future. Autonomous trucking may also lower costs, helping farmers capture key efficiencies.

While we appreciate safety concerns regarding autonomous trucks, it is important to note that use of autonomous trucks in North Dakota is currently limited to a few pilot projects, most of which utilize "leader-follower" technology. The North Dakota Department of Transportation already has authority to regulate these uses. HB 1614 would unnecessarily stifle that innovation.

We respectfully request a "Do Not Pass" on HB 1614. Thank you for your consideration. I will stand for any questions.