

Written Testimony in Support of the North Dakota Challenge Grant

Presented to the ND Senate Appropriations – Education and Environment Division

Submitted by: Ron Bergan, retired, with a B.S. in Animal Science and a M.S. in Agricultural Economics

January 21, 2025

To Chairman Sorvaag and Members of the Committee,

For the record my name is Ron Bergan, and I am retired and a graduate of NDSU. Thank you for this opportunity to give testimony in support of the North Dakota Higher Education Challenge Grant Fund.

Governor Kelly Armstrong is proposing \$50 million for the Challenge Grant. I strongly urge you to invest \$20 million of this in each of the two research universities. I have been and will continue to be a great supporter of NDSU and the state of NORTH DAKOTA.

More of NDSU graduates are staying in N.D. which is exactly what we need. NDSU, to thrive, has to have both consistent and increasing investment from the state. This grant is a great way to promote private investment as well.

I received scholarships to attend NDSU. It was truly life changing for me. Learning to deal with people and how to solve problems were as important as the classroom learning. It was one of many blessings I have received. Another was to invest in North Dakota's future. I invested with the NDSU Challenge Grants in the past for scholarships, an endowed chair and agricultural education programs.

This is an investment not an expenditure. It is critical in building our future workforce.

Thanks for considering this special opportunity and for your service to the state of North Dakota.

Ron Bergan

Retired business owner