

Chairman Luick and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on SB 2097. My name is Leslie Bieber. I currently sit on the North Dakota Community Foundation Board as a representative of education from the northwest. I am the Superintendent of Alexander School District in Alexander, ND. I am here to express my opposition to SB 2097 as currently written, while also voicing support for money going to the rural communities as I come from a city with a population of fewer than one thousand individuals. I am in opposition of unnecessary duplication with the existing resources and systems provided by the NDCF.

The North Dakota Community Foundation has already established a proven and effective framework for administering and supporting community-focused initiatives. The duplication of these efforts as proposed in SB 2097 creates inefficiencies and redirects valuable resources that could be better utilized in addressing unmet needs within our communities.

Instead of replicating what is already in place, I encourage the committee to consider amendments that focus on leveraging and strengthening the infrastructure and expertise of the North Dakota Community Foundation. By building on their existing systems, we can achieve the intent of this bill more effectively while avoiding redundancy.

I urge the committee to oppose SB 2097 ensuring a more streamlined and impactful use of resources for the benefit of North Dakota communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I will stand for any questions.