

Chairman Luick and Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee,

I am Michelle (Shelly) Ziesch a 4<sup>th</sup> generation rancher and my husband and I ranch and farm near Pettibone, ND. I am testifying in favor of SB 2202. I believe this bill would allow more ranchers the opportunity to serve on the ND Beef Commission. I know that the perception of wanting this change is a disagreement between two cattle organizations in the state, but I do not believe this to be true. I believe many producers support this change because those who are paying into the Beef Checkoff should have an equal chance to be elected to the ND Beef Commission whether you belong to an organization or not. Having an appointed board selected by the governor becomes a political appointment for a board that is collecting a checkoff from all producers. I know there was concern about the expense of running an election and I think that if more people are happy with the process of getting elected on the beef commission that fewer people would request a refund and that would help defray the cost of an election. We currently do not have a way to remove board members if they are not looking out for the best interests of the industry and an election could fix that problem by being able to run against them. I really appreciate that the board members must be active producers within the previous year so that should alleviate the concerns of the entire board being retired producers. Hopefully, an election would get more young producers interested in serving on the beef commission and bring in current ideas to help get younger generations both raising and eating more beef. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and please vote in favor of SB 2202.

Sincerely,

Michelle (Shelly) Ziesch