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**Testimony of
Matt Perdue
North Dakota Farmers Union
Before the
Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee
January 24, 2025**

Chairman Luick and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2202. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am testifying on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union's (NDFU) members. NDFU supports SB 2202.

SB 2202 establishes an election process for the North Dakota Beef Commission. Under current law, the governor appoints every member of the Beef Commission. Six of those nine appointments are made from nominations by specific groups. This process is unique among checkoffs in North Dakota. Of the 10 commodity councils in the state, eight have elected boards.

Our member-driven Policy & Action recognizes that research and promotion are important to the success of family farmer and ranchers. We support elections of checkoff boards. Our members feel the election process gives all producers equal opportunity to serve. It also gives all producers the opportunity to vote for their representatives on the commission.

SB 2202 is very similar to House Bill No. 1207, which was heard in the House Agriculture Committee last week. There are a couple differences between the two bills I'd like to highlight.

- HB 1207 establishes a referendum process for adjusting the state beef checkoff. Our Policy & Action supports a referendum process. However, we are open to advancing this legislation without a referendum process, if that is deemed more agreeable to interested stakeholders.
- SB 2202 requires in-person voting, while HB 1207 allows mail-in ballots. While our Policy & Action does not specifically address voting methods for commodity councils, we generally support providing both mail-in and in-person voting options. We think the mail-in option reduces barriers to voting for people in remote areas.

We respectfully request a "Do Pass" recommendation on SB 2202. I will stand for any questions.