



Testimony of Teran Doerr
Economic Development Association of North Dakota
In Support of SB 2390
Feb. 7, 2025

Chairman Luick and members of the Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee:

My name is Teran Doerr, and I am the President of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND). EDND represents economic development professionals across the state who work to strengthen communities, grow our economy, and improve the quality of life in North Dakota. Senate Bill 2390 supports these goals by establishing the Rural Catalyst Committee, a grant program, and a fund to help rural communities invest in important local projects.

Rural communities are the foundation of North Dakota's economy, and investing in their future is critical to keeping our state strong. This program will provide much-needed funding for projects in areas like arts and culture, economic development, education, and health. These investments will help small towns remain vibrant, competitive, and attractive places to live and work.

EDND appreciates two key provisions in this bill. First, we support the requirement for communities to contribute matching funds. Even a small match shows local buy-in and commitment, ensuring that communities are engaged in their own success. Encouraging local investment also helps attract additional funding and partnerships.

Second, we support the population eligibility threshold of 8,500 residents. North Dakota has 355 cities, but only nine have more than 8,500 people. This program ensures that rural communities of all sizes have access to resources that support growth, opportunity, and a strong quality of life.

Senate Bill 2390 is an important step in strengthening rural North Dakota. The Rural Catalyst Grant Program will help communities improve quality of life, attract and retain workforce, and create new economic opportunities. EDND urges the committee to give this bill a "Do Pass" recommendation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.