



GREATER NORTH DAKOTA CHAMBER
SB 2261
Senate Industry & Business Committee
Chair Jeff Barta
January 25, 2025

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Andrea Pfennig, and I am the Vice President of Government Affairs for the Greater North Dakota Chamber. GNDC is North Dakota's largest statewide business advocacy organization, with membership represented by small and large businesses, local chambers, and trade and industry associations across the state. We stand in **support** of Senate Bill 2261.

Manufacturers help drive and diversify North Dakota's economy. They employ over 27,000 North Dakotans, which is 6.8% of the workforce with an average annual salary of nearly \$75,000. However, workforce shortages can present a significant challenge to growing or simply maintaining operations. Labor availability has been identified as the top business concern facing companies in North Dakota and Rough Rider Industries offers a talent pool.

GNDC recognizes the benefits of Rough Rider Industries and the impacts the program has on reducing recidivism rates and providing job skills training. Approaches, such as the tax credit proposed in SB 2261, provide an opportunity for individuals involved in prison industry programs to gain exposure to employment opportunities in North Dakota.

This is a way to support prison industries in a manner that enables them to expand their mission while working in cooperation, rather than competing, with private industry. We are happy to assist with a study as the state continues to explore opportunities that are mutually beneficial.

Thank you for your consideration.