

Testimony of Troy Coons on behalf of
Northwest Landowners Association
in favor of
SENATE BILL NO. 2313
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
January 30, 2025

Chairman Patten and members of the committee, thank you for taking my testimony into consideration today.

My name is Troy Coons and I am the Chairman of the Northwest Landowners Association. Northwest Landowners Association represents hundreds of farmers, ranchers, and property owners in North Dakota. Northwest Landowners Association is a nonprofit organization, and I am not a paid lobbyist.

The Northwest Landowners Association supports SB 2313 because one of the most basic things we can all agree on in North Dakota is that we need to protect the soil when we disturb the land for development, whatever the reason. We are asking to ensure we do that for the well pads and we believe that our proposal is something that already happens in North Dakota with some operators. No one would argue that we should not preserve the suitable plant growth material when we build well pads. We are simply asking to ensure that process is planned and documents the preservation of the suitable plant growth material.

The requirements for coal mining are far more complicated. Legal counsel provided me with a copy of some of the performance standards with some highlighted that relate specifically to preservation of suitable plant growth material. Although we are not asking for something this complex, it should be recognized that we will end up disturbing as much ground in the Bakken as we have with coal mining, and the soil of the ranchers out west is as valuable to them as soil is to the farmers and ranchers in coal country.

Thank you again for your time and we urge a **do pass** on SB 2313.

Thank you,

Troy Coons
Northwest Landowners Association