Michael L Haupt, Private Landowner Mercer County, written testimony in opposition to

SB2308 Relating to Boards – Professional Soil Classifiers

State and Local Government Committee

I am a retired Land Management Professional formerly with the ND Department of Trust Lands (NDDTL). My educational and work background is Wildlife, Botany, Soils, Rights of Way and Reclamation. The Professional Soil Classifiers have been and continue to be very important to the management of this precious natural resource that we, unfortunately, refer to as "dirt." Listed below are specific events that the *Professional Soil Classifiers have contributed to the Department of Trust Lands that increased the income to the School Trust and to the NW Landowners group on SB2313 dealing with soil reservation and reclamation of disturbed energy sites.*

1) **The Professional Soil Classifiers completed and published the soil surveys for all 53 counties in North Dakota with nearly every county containing School Trust Land.**
2) **Using the soils productivity information for each soil in every county the NDDTL created a productivity rating for each quarter section of Trust Land in order to set rental rates at public auction that mirror the private land leasing market in ND. This resulted in increased income to the School Trust Fund.**
3) **The NDDTL also uses the soil productivity of each quarter section to determine its agricultural land value in order to balance the diversified portfolio of School Trust investments.**
4) **The NDDTL also uses the soils survey to determine Suitable Plant Growth Material (SPGM) reservation volumes for energy projects that disturb the surface of School Trust lands.**
5) **The agricultural real estate industry in ND utilizes the soil productivity ratings for the various types of soils on the property they are selling. This is important to the realtors, farmers and ranchers that are selling the property and those that are contemplating a purchase.**
6) **The Professional Soils Classifiers are also available to consult with cities, counties, industry and students across the state for information on soils that may be located on a project, development area or for education on soils.**
7) **This legislative session, the NW Landowners are proposing SB2313 dealing with the final reclamation of facilities built on private land for oil, gas and CO2 in ND. This proposal would utilize the digital soil survey and the Professional Soil Classifiers to train existing employees of the DMR-Oil and Gas Division to recognize and determine a Suitable Plant Growth Material (SPGM) volume for stockpiling and use in final reclamation of these facilities.**
8) **The Professional Soils Classifiers also conduct continuous educational events at schools so students learn the value of soils and the impact of soils on their lives.**

Please keep the Board of *Professional Soils Classifiers,* they remain a valuable asset to the NDDTL, NW Landowners Association, private landowners, and this great soil resource of our state! Thank you.