

TO: NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATURE-69<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION

RE: **TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL 2331**

2/7/2025

Madam Chair Roers and committee members,

Greetings, my name is Travis Bateman and I reside in McKenzie County. I am here today to speak in favor of Senate Bill 2331.

The ongoing missteps, federal government over step and dismissal of the citizens and their requests for lawful transparency, information, communication, and continual rotation of staff that are not fully engaged or in tune with the issue of our wild horses in the Theodore Roosevelt National Park (TRNP) is why I rise in support of the ongoing efforts to save, preserve, and allow for the continued existence of the wild horses in TRNP.

Over the last few years specifically, the TRNP and the National Park Service has made it abundantly clear that they intend to destroy, eradicate, and otherwise cause the intentional extinction of the Nakota horse that is unique and specific to our state and the TRNP.

Doing so goes against everything that North Dakota stands for in terms of Theodore Roosevelt and his legacy here. It goes against everything right and proper period. To say that these horses are a nuisance or cause damage to the lands is a ridiculous statement. If that is the case, then the bison need to be eradicated to and we all know that won't happen. Nor should it, I just use that to make a statement and dismiss the excuse that the horses are harmful at all.

The wild horses of the TRNP are one of the primary, if not THE primary attractant for people to visit Medora, the TRNP, Watford City, and essentially all of western North Dakota. Removal or eradication of our wild horses would have a domino effect on tourism and everything beneficial to the local economies that come with those that visit our state.

A working group of FULLY invested parties is a must but so is the pause of any further interference or harmful interactions with the horses until decisions are made. The NPS has been dishonest in recent times and cannot be trusted by anyone and they most

assuredly need to earn that trust back and mend the fences that they have all but destroyed by their choices and actions when it comes to the topic of our wild horses. They have not been good neighbors, they have not been good stewards of our state's resources within the TRNP boundaries and they need to shape up. They may be federal, they may have a different mandate that is beyond the true control of anyone in North Dakota, but I think it would be in the best interests of the TRNP that they begin repairing all that has been damaged and soon.

Thank you for your time and please give a Do Pass to SB2331.

Respectfully,

*Travis F. Bateman*

*Travis F. Bateman  
Watford City, North Dakota*

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