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Senate Workforce Committee
North Dakota State Capitol
600 E Boulevard Ave
Bismarck, ND 58505

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB2256 – Appropriation for NDSU Research and Technology Park

Chairman Wobbema and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 2256, which appropriates \$20 million to the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Research and Technology Park (RTP). As the President and CEO of the North Dakota UAS Council, I recognize the critical role RTP plays in fostering innovation, economic growth, and workforce development in our state. This investment will strengthen North Dakota's leadership in autonomous technology and provide significant benefits to our economy and national security.

The RTP's vision is centered on robotics, artificial intelligence, and autonomous technology, particularly intelligent mobile equipment. This funding will enable North Dakota to remain at the forefront of these rapidly advancing fields, ensuring our state remains a national leader in autonomy development and product creation.

One of the RTP's key strengths is its ability to translate discovery into societal benefit. Innovation is only as valuable as its real-world applications, and the RTP serves as a critical bridge between cutting-edge technological advancements and their practical implementation. By fostering collaboration between academia, industry, and government, RTP ensures that these innovations lead to meaningful products and solutions that benefit society, industry, and our economy.

Furthermore, investing in RTP will yield economic, security, and workforce benefits. As automation and AI transform industries, North Dakota must address emerging skill gaps to ensure our workforce remains competitive. RTP's initiatives will support job creation, workforce training, and the advancement of autonomous technologies that enhance our manufacturing productivity, security, and economic resilience.

This investment is not only about supporting an innovation hub; it is about advancing North Dakota's autonomy leadership. By strengthening our commitment to air and ground autonomy, RTP will drive advancements that position North Dakota as a global leader in autonomous technology, attracting businesses and talent to our state.

The transformative potential and job creation tied to this initiative cannot be overstated. With RTP's capabilities, this investment will drive economic impact across multiple sectors, from agriculture and defense to logistics and energy. The RTP has the potential to create high-paying jobs, stimulate private sector investment, and enhance North Dakota's technological competitiveness on a national scale.

For these reasons, I strongly urge your support of SB2256. The funding will ensure the RTP continues to drive innovation, economic prosperity, and workforce development, securing North Dakota's place as a leader in autonomous systems and next-generation technology.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony and am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Very respectfully,

Matt Dunlevy
President & CEO