

01/30/2025



**Chairman Wobbema and Esteemed Members of the Committee,**

I am writing on behalf of 701 Fund, an organization dedicated to supporting the growth and success of North Dakota's entrepreneurial ecosystem, particularly in the emerging sectors of technology, innovation, and autonomous systems. We are proud to be a part of the state's ongoing efforts to foster economic diversification and technological leadership. As Managing Director of 701 Fund, ***I strongly support Senate Bill 2256 and urge you to approve this critical piece of legislation.***

The NDSU Research & Technology Park (RTP) has been a driving force in advancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in North Dakota for over 25 years. Its mission aligns closely with 701 Fund's commitment to helping transform groundbreaking ideas into successful, scalable businesses. By supporting SB 2256, we can drive the RTP's new business model that will serve as a key catalyst for innovation—especially in the areas of autonomous systems, robotics, and artificial intelligence (AI)—that will benefit not only North Dakota but also the broader national and global markets.

North Dakota is uniquely positioned at the intersection of agriculture, energy, and defense industries, each of which is being revolutionized by autonomous technology. The RTP is essential in bringing together academia, industry leaders, and investors to accelerate the commercialization of these technologies. However, as it stands, we lack a dedicated space where these innovations can be nurtured, refined, and brought to market in partnership with private industry and the defense sector. SB 2256 will address this gap by establishing a nexus of robotics and AI engineering talent to help fast-track solutions and create new economic opportunities for our state.

The growth of the RTP is crucial not only for technological advancement but also for job creation and workforce development. By strengthening North Dakota's AI, robotics, and autonomous mobile equipment capabilities, we are equipping our workforce with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in the industries of tomorrow. Additionally, these efforts will directly contribute to North Dakota's growing reputation as a hub for innovation, attracting investment and talent to our state.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the committee to support SB 2256. By doing so, you will enable North Dakota to maintain its leadership in emerging technologies, drive economic growth, and ensure our state remains competitive on a national and global scale. At 701 Fund, we are excited to continue supporting this vision and look forward to seeing the RTP's continued success.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Syrup', written in a cursive style.

Greg Syrup  
Managing Director  
701 Fund