



Bioscience Association of North Dakota
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**Position: The Bioscience Association of North Dakota supports
North Dakota HB 1141 – LIFT FUNDING BILL**

TESTIMONY OF: Richard Glynn, Executive Director of the Bioscience Association of North Dakota (BioND)

The Innovation Technology Loan Fund, or LIFT, is a \$15 million gap fund created by the 2019 legislature in response to “funding gaps” with innovation-based companies.

\$15 M was invested in 20 companies in 8 months of 2020 and there were \$60 M in funding requests demonstrating the strong demand for gap financing. LIFT funding should be increased to \$30 to \$45 M to meet demand and potential impact.

BioND is dedicated to expanding the boundaries of bioscience to commercialize, grow and sustain globally competitive bio-science companies, creating high-quality jobs and economic opportunity in North Dakota. Bioscience companies are a great way to diversify and grow the state’s economy. Our mission is to bring forward the entrepreneurial culture into bioscience, biotechnology research and business development in agriculture, life and energy science fields (feed, fuel and heal the world), while concurrently growing economic opportunities in North Dakota.

To fulfill this mission, BioND reaches out to bio-entrepreneurs who may have a desire to relocate to North Dakota for various business and social reasons. One of the biggest reasons that they wish to relocate here is because they originally lived here or received their higher educational degree from here and they missed the quality of life that they enjoyed in North Dakota. A person would be surprised how many people wish to return to North Dakota and bring their now successful businesses with them. After “certain happenings” in other States, a lot of people want to return to the peace, safety and security of North Dakota, not to mention the State’s friendly business climate, low taxes and skilled workforce. But there is a clear need to obtain gap funding in order to make this happen. It is costly to “pick up” and move a whole company from one State to another State, and LIFT funding supplies them with the capital to make that move.

I am personally familiar with three of the companies that received funding through LIFT. They are Access Points, Krampade, and Checkable Medical. Two of the companies, Access Points and Checkable Medical, came from the Twin Cities area and Krampade was originally started in Lincoln, NE. These are good solid companies, and it was through the use of LIFT that we were able to provide the gap financing that enabled them to make this move. About one-third of the LIFT portfolio are



related to bioscience. There is a good pipeline of bioscience companies in the queue for LIFT funding for 2021-23.

LIFT fills this funding gap and provides a competitive advantage to our state – a magnet to attract entrepreneurs.

But LIFT is not only for companies wanting to move from their present location to North Dakota, but also to give entrepreneurs in North Dakota early-stage financing for growth. The LIFT program – with flexible gap financing – can provide essential growth capital while helping to preserve owner equity. These innovative entrepreneurs are then able to keep control of their venture and are not under the control of equity investors from out of state.

The Bioscience Industry is a very competitive industry. If North Dakota wishes to expand this industry in this State, it needs programs such as LIFT in order to offer the help and incentives to have businesses not only move from other locations to North Dakota but to promote innovative entrepreneurs in North Dakota with essential growth capital.

Thank you for your favorable consideration and support of HB 1141, and to increase the fund size to \$30 to \$45 M.