

House Bill 1287

House Appropriations Committee

1/25/2023

Testimony by Scott J Davis

Good morning, Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Scott Davis, I was the former Executive Director of the ND Indian Affairs Commission. A post I held for 12 years. I now represent a few Tribes in ND today. I am also a proud member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and descent of the Turtle Mt. Band of Chippewa.

Whitestone Hill Historical Site has been and is a very important piece of history to the local residents of Kulm ND, the citizens of ND and Tribal citizens of ND. During my time at the Indian Affairs Commission, in partnership with the ND Historical Society, we spent a lot of time talking and holding public forums discussing the history and accounts of Whitestone. It was good example of how ND people and Tribal members can come to an agreed understanding of historical events. As we know, some of the events have not been good during a time of assimilation and battles that occurred across what we know as North Dakota today.

Regardless of history, ND is doing the right in recognizing the importance of history that sets the truth for those who want to learn, understand and value our rich history. ND also did right in making this a State Historical Park, where families are able to read and experience history and enjoy a day of family fellowship.

The past number of years, Local, State and Tribal leaders agreed that there should be a monument, statue that commemorates the fallen Dakota and Lakota members that fell/died that day. Much like the fallen soldiers that fell/died that day. In the past we were able to secure funds to begin a project, but through various events of low commodity prices and a pandemic, we find ourselves still in a premature planning stage.

Thanks to the leadership of Rep. Brandenburg, Rep. Grueneich and Senator Eberle, today we find ourselves wanting to get this project fully funded and completed in the next 2-3 years.

I am respectfully asking for your support for HB 1287 and allow the good people at the ND Historical Society administer this project. Support the good people in the Kulm area that will help with local tourism and business development. Just as important to continue to strengthen relationship between the State of North Dakota and the 5 Tribes of North Dakota.

Mr. Chairman, that conclude my testimony and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.