

Carie Boster  
Dunn County Job Development Authority  
205 Owens St.  
Manning, ND 58642

March 10, 2023

RE:                   **SUPPORT \$8 MILLION FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY  
AMENDMENT TO ND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE APPROPRIATIONS BILL 1018**

Dear Legislators:

Please accept this letter of support for state appropriations to support Regional Councils statewide. The Regional Councils have been partners in local and regional economic and community development for the past fifty years and are led by local elected officials and key partners.

While the Regional Councils were created by the state in 1973, **the flaw was the lack of a long-term consistent funding mechanism** to meet the purpose and objectives outlined in the North Dakota Century Code:  
*to establish consistent statewide policy for planning, economic development programs, operations, coordination, and related cooperative activities of state/local governments to resolve issues and problems transcending individual jurisdictions.*

Today, 70% of the state's population growth is concentrated in only three counties: Cass, Burleigh, and Williams. Thirty (30) counties in North Dakota continue to lose population which is resulting in increased costs for basic governmental functions whereby increasing local property taxes and state funding requests. Existing Regional Council budgets support only a fraction of the necessary staff to address regional needs to elevate the entire state when compared to our urban centers' professional teams. These budgets come from numerous sources (including every county in the state), rely heavily on short-term grants, and do not provide long-term funding to address long-term needs.

North Dakota Regional Councils provide access to programs and opportunities across rural and urban centers of our state while supplying the essential support to those of us working at the grass roots level to build our communities. Please support providing a long-term funding mechanism for Regional Councils and the important work they do to connect people with opportunities.

Sincerely,

Carie Boster  
Director  
Dunn County Job Development Authority

*Dunn County is an equal opportunity provider and employer*

