North Dakota Water Resource Districts Association

**House Agriculture Committee
Hearing for H.B. 1396
January 23, 2025
Testimony of Jack Dwyer on behalf of the ND Water Resource Districts Association**

Chairman Beltz and members of the committee, my name is Jack Dwyer, and I serve as the Executive Secretary of the North Dakota Water Resource Districts Association (NDWRDA).

The NDWRDA represents water resource boards across the state who are responsible for wise and effective water resource management in their areas. One way many water resource boards achieve this management is through building and maintaining conveyance infrastructure to remove excess water from farm fields into public ditches and on to natural waterbodies.

The process for building and maintaining this infrastructure is locally led and locally driven, as it should be. Water boards work closely with local producers when exploring the establishment of new projects or looking to maintain existing infrastructure.

While the NDWRDA does not have any written policy relating to surface or subsurface drainage permits where a landowner has voted against a regional drainage project, our policy does recognize the importance of regional drainage projects:

> **Resolution No. 74 – We believe assessment drains provide crucial drainage relief for North Dakota farmers; provide outlets for agriculture and tile drainage; and protect local, county, and state road infrastructure from damages due to sustained saturation and uncontrolled drainage.**

We all know that challenges exist relating to regional drainage projects. Several of our member districts have experienced opposition from landowners on maintaining infrastructure who also receive significant benefits and utilize that same infrastructure extensively.