

Written Testimony of Terri Zimmerman
North Dakota Senate
March 13, 2024

Members of Congress. I am Terri Zimmerman, CEO of Packet Digital and Botlink, two companies developing and manufacturing drone batteries, software, and battery cells right here in North Dakota.

I was born and raised on a farm outside of Hannah, ND, graduated from the University of North Dakota, and have worked in the technology sector in North Dakota for over 25 years. I was the CFO and Vice President of Operations of Great Plains Software during their rapid growth and expansion and became the CEO of Packet Digital in 2013, which then acquired a controlling stake in Botlink in 2015. Additionally, I was appointed to a state economic development board by several Governors of North Dakota and served for 17 years, and have been chair of The Research Institute for Autonomous Systems at the University of North Dakota since 2017. I am a proud North Dakotan and have been a strong advocate for our state's technology sector.

I offer my testimony today strongly in support of SB 2018. In my years of experience working with the North Dakota Department of Commerce, specifically the North Dakota Development Fund, I have had the opportunity to see NDDFs positive impact on businesses in North Dakota. NDDF has provided significant capital to create jobs in our state.

As a world leader in advanced technology for drones, our companies have successfully utilized NDDF resources to build upon our successes, and rapidly scale our business, which has enabled us to stay a leader in our competitive industry. The result of this success is clear to see in the state of North Dakota, with our businesses consistent track record of creating high-paying, highly-technical jobs right here at home, as well as multiple large commercial projects/investments in Fargo, including the region's first battery cell manufacturing facility.

It's my belief that one of the biggest advantages North Dakota has over our regional neighbors is an active Department of Commerce that works to boost local investment in our state, and the North Dakota Development Fund is a perfect example of how to put that idea in motion. For the state to remain a leader in technology fields, it's essential that initiatives such as the NDDF continue their important work of advocating for the state of North Dakota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terri Zimmerman', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Terri Zimmerman, CEO of Packet Digital and Botlink