

Support of HB1382

House Finance and Taxation Committee

February 4, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Headland and Committee members.

I am Larry Syverson from Mayville. I grow soybeans on my farm in Traill County. I am the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors for Roseville Township in Traill County and the Executive Director of the North Dakota Township Officers Association. NDTOA represents 6,000 Township Officers serving more than 1,400 dues-paying member townships.

Thank you for this opportunity for me to say that NDTOA supports this very reasonable fuel tax increase for the benefit of local governments. The buying power of existing funds and levies continues to shrink, and the demands on infrastructure continue to grow.

Of course, much of that demand comes from increased agricultural productivity and livestock development but also from commuting workers living in rural areas who drive to work. Also, the natural resources that people enjoy in our state are primarily out in the counties and townships. When an outdoor enthusiast buys the gear and supplies for whatever they intend to do, it is mainly done in a larger city where local sales tax is imposed. That tax benefits the community where the purchase is made but not the area where the products are actually used. It does nothing to support the county and township roads that bear the traffic. HB1382 would help the rural counties and townships provide the road network that many from outside those districts use for business or pleasure.

Since townships and cities are not included in the needs study, I have requested that the basis for distribution to townships in HB1382 be changed to the maintained mileage formula in use by the state treasurer's office for other township funds. I believe that the League of Cities will provide the appropriate language to cover the distribution to cities. NDTOA would support these amendments.

Chairman Headland and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to testify today. Please give HB1382, with the appropriate amendment, your favorable consideration. This concludes my prepared statement. I will try to answer any questions you might have.