

March 8, 2025
Testimony in Favor of SB 2039
House Finance and Taxation Committee

Chairman Headland and members of the Committee:

My name is Brian Vculek and I farm with my family in southeast North Dakota. We farm near Crete and our potato warehouses are located within the city limits of Oakes. I'm writing in support of SB 2039. I own potato warehouses classified as commercial for property tax purposes. My family purchased these facilities from a different potato grower in the early 1990s. We have utilized these facilities since to store potatoes raised by my family. In the early 2000s a new warehouse was built near our facility that we subsequently purchased and still utilize.

Included below is an approximate outline of the roughly 80 acres we own near our warehouses. All areas within the black outline below are assessed commercial, including the tillable acres. No activity aside from our family planting, growing, harvesting, storing, and shipping raw crops occur within the black boundary. We maintain all the gravel driveways and receive no sewer or water service from the City of Oakes. We manage our own garbage but still pay the City's required minimum garbage fee. We manage our own snow and often assist with clearing of roads used to access our property during heavy winter snow events.

I support clarifying the definition of raising an agricultural crop to include the storage of that same crop. Under current law, our storage facility is assessed differently than neighboring potato storage facilities. We have discussed this issue with our County Assessor numerous times. Clarification of the definition for assessors across the state should help provide uniform property tax classification that encourages growth of production agriculture.

I appreciate the work done by the interim committee and the time your committee is giving this issue. I think clarifying the definition of raising an agricultural crop can help create consistency in tax classifications. I would appreciate your support on SB 2039.

Sincerely,

Brian Vculek
Crete, North Dakota

