

Chairman Warrey
Vice Chairman Ostlie,
and Honorable members of the House Industry Business and Labor Committee - Landon Bahl, Josh Christy, Jayme Davis, Gretchen Dobervich, Karen Grindberg, Jorin Johnson, Jim Kasper, Ben Koppelman, Dan Ruby, Mike Schatz, Austen Schauer, and Daniel R. Vollmer.

I am Tim Flakoll, writing you as a private citizen of North Dakota encouraging your **support for HB 1438** which seeks funding for the historic Fargo Theatre that opened 100 years ago.

The Fargo Theatre is a high-use facility located in historic downtown Fargo. It hosts cinema (including many independent first-run films) and serves as a live event venue. I drive past it every day on the way to work and am always amazed at the frequency and breadth of offerings they provide to people of all ages in our region.

I have personally participated in countless events and performances at the art deco facility. It is not just an important part of our past, but will **play a vital role in our future**.

In recent years I have seen great movies from Classic Movie Series movies such as Cassablanca to the Sound of Music. I have used it to host and have participated in Downtown Community Partnership events, agriculture roundtables, patriotic events and to hear keynote talks from some of America's best speakers.

I have seen performances ranging from comedian Charlie Berens, to singers Clint Black, and the Blenders, to Black Jacket Symphony – Led Zeppelin. It truly has something for everyone and brings in people from within 150 miles or more to North Dakota, helping to fill our hotels and restaurants.

The marquee of the Fargo Theatre is said to be the most photographed place in the metro and those images have **brought coast to coast positive recognition to North Dakota** in print, TV and social media.

I have served on the Fargo Film Festival committee which is held every March since 2001. The festival has accepted submissions from independent filmmakers from more than 35 states and 20 countries making it a go-to destination. One of this year's featured guests will be Molly Ringwall, famous iconic films such as "Sixteen Candles", "Pretty in Pink" and "The Breakfast Club." Other multi-generational activities include their kid's movie series which provides kids and their families with affordable fun.

The Theatre is nine years older than the North Dakota State Capitol. Much like the capitol, it is amazing, but it needs refurbishment (plumbing, HVAC, lighting, projectors, seats, etc.) from its original environment in order to best serve the people of North Dakota. Please consider providing funds which can be used to help leverage private donations in order to help keep it as a **pearl on the prairie and a source of pride for all North Dakotans**.

Tim Flakoll

Tim Flakoll

Past State Senator (1998-2016)

Past President Pro Tempore of the Senate

Cass County Commissioner

Past Chairman – Downtown Community Partnership