



HOUSE BILL NO. 1218
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
TODD PORTER, CHAIR
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1218

Chairman Porter and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee. I am Parrell Grossman, and it is my privilege to be the Legislative Director for the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association. I appear on behalf of the Association in support of House Bill 1218.

The Association advocates for more than 8,900 operations that raise soybeans in North Dakota. In 2024, North Dakota farmers planted 6.6 million acres of soybeans, producing over 245 million bushels of soybeans in North Dakota.

As I am sure this Committee is aware, according to a 2022 North Dakota Agriculture Industry Economic Contribution Analysis conducted by the NDSU, the economic contribution to North Dakota is \$30.8 billion, including \$18.8 billion from direct output and \$12 billion from secondary output.

The Association recognizes water resource districts sponsor many water conveyance and flood control projects of a variety of sizes and we greatly value and appreciate their work on behalf of our counties and townships, and rural residents, including our farmers and agricultural producers.

In terms of an economic analysis and economic benefit to the impacted project area and residents, crop values should not be the only consideration. There are important factors beyond crop value. Water management helps not only farmers, but also counties and townships to prevent water inundated roads. Flooded roads are a huge inconvenience to all rural residents and a particular expense to farmers in terms of delays in planting, receiving inputs and other goods and services and in getting their crops timely to markets. Water management is critically important to farmers in the eastern part of the state.

State funding is a necessary and important part of these rural water projects, and it is not possible for these projects to occur without that state funding. The Association understands the value and necessity for an economic analysis in large projects. We, however, share the valid concerns of the water resource districts with the delays and expense of the economic analysis requirements for smaller projects. The Association encourages and supports the proposed legislative changes to increase the project value threshold.

We understand and respect the financial accountability for state funds. We, however, believe that with smaller projects, it should be enough that the rural landowners and water resource districts support the projects with their votes. Furthermore, these water resource districts are accountable to the residents of their districts, as well as the citizens of this state.

For the reasons stated, the Association respectfully asks the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee to give House Bill 1218 a “Do Pass” recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration and I would be pleased to try and answer any questions.