

## **Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 1018**

**Submitted by Patrick Kirby, Founder, Do Good Better – West Fargo, ND**

Chair Sorvaag, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit my support of House Bill No. 1018. My name is Patrick Kirby and a small business owner from District 13, with over 20 years of experience working with nonprofit organizations across North Dakota and the Midwest. I've had the privilege of helping communities leverage opportunities like this matching grant specifically allocated for the Fargo Theatre in conjunction with its upcoming 100<sup>th</sup> year celebration, to transform their most beloved spaces into thriving hubs of culture, history, and economic vitality.

The matching grant proposed in House Bill No. 1018 is a proven strategy that creates momentum, inspires generosity, and energizes campaigns like the Fargo Theatre's Centennial Capital Campaign. Matching grants work because they double the impact of every dollar raised, signaling to donors that their contributions will go even further. In my experience, matches like this one are catalytic—they not only accelerate fundraising but also bring new supporters to the table, creating a ripple effect of community investment.

The \$1.1m in one-time funding for a "historic theater restoration grant" (line 18 on page 2) is a wonderful opportunity for the theatre to leverage their supporters to raise a significant amount of revenue for this project. A the 1:2 match requirement (that is specified in the last sentence of section 6) ensures that the Fargo Theatre requires a great deal of effort into the campaign as well.

This legislative body has a long and proud history of supporting iconic and historic projects across North Dakota. From restoring landmarks to funding cultural assets, you have recognized the value these projects bring to our communities. The Fargo Theatre is no exception. Its presence in downtown Fargo has been a cornerstone of our state's cultural identity for nearly a century. A matching grant for the Theatre aligns perfectly with your legacy of preserving history while investing in the future.

But the Fargo Theatre is more than a historic building—it's a place where memories are made and communities come together. For me, those memories include one of the proudest moments of my life as a parent: watching my daughter dance on the Fargo Theatre stage. I sat in that historic auditorium, surrounded by neighbors, friends, and strangers, all brought together by a shared sense of joy and pride. That's the power of the Fargo Theatre. It's not just a venue; it's a living, breathing symbol of who we are and what we value as North Dakotans.

As we approach the Theatre's centennial, the timing of this matching grant couldn't be more significant. It's an opportunity to honor the Theatre's history while ensuring it remains a vibrant part of our future. With your support, the Fargo Theatre can continue to inspire, connect, and energize our community for the next 100 years.

Thank you for considering this investment in one of North Dakota's most cherished cultural treasures. I urge you to vote in favor of House Bill No. 1018 and help ensure that the Fargo Theatre remains a beacon of art, history, and community for generations to come.

Patrick Kirby

Founder, Do Good Better

West Fargo, ND