

**Testimony for the County Fair Resiliency Grant bill**  
**Christopher Schauer, President, Adams County Fair Association**  
**Senate Government Operations sub-committee – HB1591**  
**March 24, 2025**

Chairman Wanzek and members of the Senate Government Operations sub-Committee, I am writing in support of HB 1591, the County Fair Resiliency Grant Bill. My name is Christopher Schauer and I am the President of the Adams County Fair Association in Hettinger, ND.

County Fairs are part of the fabric of summer and fall in ND with 4H members and the general public submitting their static and livestock exhibits, participating in rodeos, and for many, enjoying the one piece of “culture” that comes to town as entertainment. All of these events form what everyone knows as the “County Fair”. Larger counties have larger fairs, smaller counties have smaller fairs, but all of us participate at our own level in a wholesome activity for all ages, especially 4H youth. In Adams County many of our 4H participants in livestock are owning their own animals for the first time. Their families don’t own livestock and 4H provides the opportunity for them to learn about animal husbandry, where their food comes from, and most importantly, life skills and responsibility. All of these fairs, large or small, have one commonality – facilities. We can’t have a rodeo without an arena; we can’t have a static show without a building, we can’t have a livestock show without pens and a show arena; and we can’t have a band without a stage. Many of these facilities across the state trace their origins to early 1900’s. Our town, Hettinger, was founded in 1907. Over the years we have conducted many capital fundraising efforts to maintain our fairgrounds with the limit funds we have. We maintain our operating budgets on a combination of fundraising and mills, but deferred maintenance and modern buildings don’t fall within those budgets. Building costs have skyrocketed in the past decade and our needs are not being met with our current funds. Some of our current projects that need to be addressed are putting new lights in for our rodeo arena as they are approaching 40 years old and are becoming non-operational, and renovating our main “hoop barn” that was put up 30 years ago and is starting to rip and tear in all of the wrong places. One item of concern for us smaller fairs is how much match is required. We understand the need to have “skin in the game”, but a 1 to 1 match will be difficult to achieve. Providing the opportunity for “in kind” match would also help meet that requirement.

I encourage you to give HB1591 a DO PASS recommendation and give fairs of all sizes a chance to address needed maintenance and building projects so we can continue to provide these services to our communities.

Sincerely,

Christopher Schauer  
President, Adams County Fair Association