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**Testimony of  
Matt Perdue  
North Dakota Farmers Union  
In support of HB 1554  
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
March 7, 2025**

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Chairman Patten and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1554. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am testifying on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union's (NDFU) members. NDFU supports HB 1554.

NDFU is proud to have a seat on the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) Advisory Board. Many of the projects funded by OHF support conservation on working agricultural lands. That support helps family farmers and ranchers build on their strong history of stewardship. We believe a strong OHF process is beneficial to the success of the fund.

We support the addition of the Department of Water Resources as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the OHF Advisory Board. The addition of the Department of Water Resources recognizes the important role OHF plays in promoting stewardship of our state's water resources.

This legislation also allows OHF to advance a project funding recommendation with a majority vote of the advisory board *members present*. Under the current process, a majority of *all* advisory board members must approve of a project before it moves forward. It is common for boards to require a majority vote of *members present*, and we think this is an appropriate change.

We believe HB 1554 offers an improvement to the OHF process. We respectfully request a "Do Pass" recommendation on HB 1554. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I will stand for any questions.