Testimony in favor of SB2106

Good morning, my name is Brandon Garaas. I'm a 4th generation farmer in Williams County. I'm writing in favor of SB2106 today. I was very vocal about abolishing weather modification in Williams County. I've been following weather modification and the airplanes that have controlled it for the last 10 years or so. I've been farming for the last 12 years and have received some sort of hail damage in at least 4 years of it. The most notable years were an early storm in 2020 that took out our roof at our home and devastated about 25% of our crops. Almost every roof in Williston was replaced, and many vehicles and private properties were damaged. I wonder what the final tally on damage to this area was for that storm. The storm on August 1st, 2023, was the icing on the cake. We only were able to harvest about 25% of our farm, only 15% had little or no hail. The rest was a complete wipeout. This storm started at the 13-mile corner north of Williston and left a devastating path all the way north of Bismarck. The tens of millions if not hundreds of millions of dollars in crop losses were left out of the final summary for the 2023 weather modification meeting. The droughts we had in 2020 and 2022 were another example of why we shouldn't mess with mother nature. The countless times I've watched rain showers or storms develop only to have these airplanes make them disappear is very frustrating being a farmer. Then there are times where you hope they will "suppress" the hail only to have your crop destroyed. If this program was so beneficial for our farming community or for reducing damage to property, why aren't there more states or counties involved in this? Ending this program in Williams and Mountrail counties last year should make a clear point that most of the residents in North Dakota do not want this program and we should leave the weather up to Mother Nature herself.

Thank you and I will answer any additional questions, if need be,

Brandon Garaas

Williston, ND