

**North Dakota Stockmen's Association**  
**Testimony to the**  
**Senate Appropriations Committee on HB 1475**  
**March 29, 2021**

Good afternoon, Chairman Holmberg and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee. For the record, my name is Julie Ellingson and I represent the North Dakota Stockmen's Association, a 91-year-old beef cattle trade organization representing more than 3,000 North Dakota cattle-ranching families.

The North Dakota Stockmen's Association rises in support of HB 1475 and the Agriculture Diversification and Development (ADD) Fund that it creates. In our view, the ADD Fund established in this bill will help bolster value-added agriculture opportunities in North Dakota, including projects within the livestock industry sector – from production to processing facilities and many in between – create new jobs and add value for our state's farmers, ranchers and overall economy.

This program has some special features, providing a host of different tools from loans and interest-rate buydowns to grants to bring dreams to reality and get these projects off the ground. This will benefit our state's foundational industry, agriculture, and the economic viability of North Dakota. A lot of work and revisions have gone into the drafting of this bill by legislators and other stakeholders, and we are grateful for their work and pleased with the final structure. It utilizes the expertise and proven track record of the Bank of North Dakota and the Department of Agriculture, as well as the new ADD Committee, which will be comprised of stakeholders and the banking community, to execute the program and diversify and develop our industry.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1475.