

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Calli Thorne and I'm from Watford City where we are 4th generation ranchers and my three kids (who are 9, 7, and 3) are the 5th generation. We have a cow/calf operation, custom backgrounding feedlot, and just last year we also started selling beef directly to consumers. I am also a certified speaker, trainer and coach with the John Maxwell Team.

I tell you all of this because we utilize the NDSU Extension Service throughout the year not only in our businesses, but also as a family.

It was exciting to see the restoration in Extension's budget from the Senate and I know many like myself, hope that it will carry over into the House as well.

The livestock initiative will provide increased growth for our industry and help to enhance our value-added markets. Educational programming in business and economics, health and also land management will not only increase our livestock performance and profitability, but programming like this can also improve our overall lands and help us to make decisions in our businesses that will impact the generations to come.

I believe it is critical to have these positions if we want to continue providing unbiased, science-based information to producers like myself across the state. The combined effort we've made in the past can be seen as local economics continue to be strengthened.

As a 4-H leader myself who spent ten years in the program, I'm thankful for the endless opportunities I had to grow throughout my life. And now I get to see my kids benefit first-hand from the continued and always impactful 4-H programming, too!

I ask for your continued support of the restoration of NDSU Extension's budget and any additional funds for Extension initiatives. It is greatly appreciated, and I thank you for giving me the time to share with you today.

Calli Thorne