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February 2, 2021

Testimony of:
Geoff Simon, Lobbyist #144
in support of HB 1380
House Appropriations Committee

Chairman Delzer and Committee members:

On behalf of the city, county and school district members of the Western Dakota Energy Association (WDEA), we wish to express our strong support for House Bill 1380 to promote economic diversification in North Dakota, and dedicate “streams” for the deposit of future Legacy Fund earnings.

WDEA’s board of directors discussed in detail the economic diversification component of this legislation. We support the provision that up to 90 percent of grants awarded by the committee go to NDSU and UND, with the operative words being “up to.” Our association believes there is tremendous potential for Minot State University, Dickinson State University and other institutions of higher education in the energy-producing region of western North Dakota to make a significant contribution to the state’s research efforts aimed at developing new technology, concepts, careers, and products that promote job creation and economic opportunity.

WDEA believes the streams identified for distribution of Legacy Fund earnings in Section 6 of the bill correctly recognize categories of greatest importance to the future of our citizens. Earmarking revenue to areas such as highway funding, school construction, state and local infrastructure, career and technical education, and promoting sustainability in the state’s energy sector will help ensure a bright future for the people of North Dakota.

WDEA applauds the legislators who developed and sponsored this legislation for their wisdom and foresight, ensuring the wise investment of the state’s Legacy Fund earnings. We encourage your strong support for HB 1380.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.