

Richard A. Schock Testimony Senate Appropriations Committee

Thank you for your time Mr. Chairman and thanks to the rest of this committee membership. Let me begin by introducing myself to you my name is Richard Schock from Kindred, ND. Raised in Forbes, ND I was raised around farming and livestock. I am Chief of our local Kindred Fire and Rescue Department and have been in the fire service for 17 years. I have seen my fair share of tragedy over the years. I lost my father on our family farm south of Forbes, ND at the age of 7 to a livestock incident. This came as a hard blow to our entire family as having three other siblings my mother had a difficult time continuing running our 75 head dairy operation. We left the farm after about 5 years. I worked for farmers pretty much my entire life as I enjoy it very much. I attended a farm safety camp put on by our local extension office and thought it was pretty great and still remember it pretty well. As I grew up got married moved to another farming community Kindred, ND I got to know many people as this is a wonderful place to be my friend talked me into joining him on the local fire department, we had good times together. We celebrated a small Christmas gathering together then a couple days later we received an emergency call to my friend's farm, it read grain bin entrapment. My friend lost his life December 26, 2008. Our department put together a specialized rescue team to deal with these accidents on farms shortly after. As our department trained, we became educators to our local community but wanted to try to help on a larger scale as our community is not the only place accidents happen. I reached out to NDSU and extension to try and invite them to come down and visit with us on the types of things we do. We had several extension agents present when our team did several public service announcements with BEK broadcasting. The relationship with extension became a strong one as we have an excellent group of diverse individuals that reach communities throughout ND. We work together on all sorts of projects together like combine fire checklists to bin safety reminders. I have worked and been a presenter to several large-scale groups through extension even out of state. We are gaining significant momentum for farm safety through extension and our programs will save lives and property of producers. Currently we have several large-scale collaborative efforts in the works through extension that will for sure bring farm safety to the forefront with help from this committee. As a young farm kid, I was fortunate to have extension help with our program and I can remember how it helped make me the man I am today. I hope we can continue to grow and work with extension to bring back and drive more trainings and education pieces to family farmers and save lives together.