

Madam Chairwoman Bell and Members of the Senate Finance and Taxation Committee,

For the record, my name is Greg Svenningsen. I am currently serving as the Chair of the North Dakota Wheat Commission, but today I come before you as a diversified farmer/rancher that produces wheat, corn, soybeans and cattle near Valley City in Barnes County. Because of that diversification, I have been chosen to share testimony with you today. I am a strong supporter of House Bill 1431 and I want you to know that the Ag Coalition's broad base of members have also expressed unanimous support for the Ag Products Development Center.

North Dakota has a long history of leading the nation in agriculture. Agriculture is a primary revenue generator for our state to the tune of approximately \$10 Billion dollars **annually** over the past decade. The Northern Crops Institute will be included in the Development Center and I have served on that Board. I have seen the value and importance of bringing participants and potential customers from around the world to North Dakota to showcase what we have to offer. These groups are made up of millers, bakers, and procurement personnel for example. We have hosted some of the NCI groups at our farm and been able to demonstrate, from a producer perspective, how the crops are grown, cared for and harvested. Innovative product development and product/ingredient promotion efforts go "hand in hand" in today's food business. Recognizing that fact, NCI has been increasingly successful at differentiating our ag products as "ingredients". Our ND ag products have developed a strong reputation, world-wide, for being reliable, consistent, and high quality ingredients and therefore, a formula for repeat business. Best of all, this creates more demand and revenue for our producers and our state. A new Development Center is

really an opportunity to build on this platform and continue that upward momentum.

Every North Dakota citizen benefits when we can create additional opportunities, add value and generate additional revenue through greater market access in both domestic and foreign markets. We are a family farm, like many others across the state. It's very important to me that those new opportunities be available for our future farmers.

I believe that building the Ag Products Development Center shows foresight in sustaining our next generation of producers and will help to keep North Dakota as a cutting edge leader for agriculture in our nation. I don't believe that the Center is a cost to North Dakota but actually an investment in an asset that will provide a return many times over in the future. I'm sure the commodity groups have submitted valuable written testimony with additional facts and references in support of HB 1431. I want to thank you for this opportunity on behalf of North Dakota producers, to express our enthusiasm and backing for the Development Center and also thank you for your past and ongoing support of North Dakota's #1 industry.

I would be happy to try and answer any questions you may have.