

Transportation Infrastructure's Role in Economic Growth: ND 13.

Budget Committee Hearing: August 18, 2010

Honorable Senator Conrad, Members of the Panel and distinguished guests,

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

My name is Patrick Pithey. I am the Merchandising Manager for Cargill Corn Milling of Wahpeton, ND.

Cargill is an international producer and marketer of food, agricultural, financial and industrial products and services. Founded in 1865, our privately held company employs 131,000 people in 66 countries. We help customers succeed through collaboration and innovation, and are committed to sharing our global knowledge and experience to help meet economic, environmental and social challenges.

We have 476 employees in North Dakota at 5 locations and I'm proud to say our Chairman and CEO, Greg Page is a North Dakota native and graduate of UND.

Sustainable transportation infrastructure is essential for economic growth. North Dakota, and the southeastern region, enjoy a diverse economic base that deploys light and medium manufacturing and distribution, commercial retail, financial and medical services, educational and recreational opportunities along with a continuum of expanding agricultural production, processing and distribution activities. The capability to move raw materials in and finished products to market, employees to and from, home, work and Main Street, students to campus and patients to care, happens only when a safe and effective transportation infrastructure is maintained.

Transportation infrastructure is critical to our business in Wahpeton on a day to day basis and ND Highway 13 is a primary route. It impacts our 120 employees and additional 50 on-site contractors as they commute to and from work. It facilitates the annual delivery of 26,000 loads of corn from farmers within the region. It enables the shipment of 13,000 loads of finished product to reach our customers each year.

Over the past 10 years, corn production in Richland County has increased by over 60%, similar to agricultural production trends across the region and the state. Being able to safely and efficiently transport that production to market is vital for the producer, the processor / marketer and the consumer.

Continued investment and maintenance of roadway infrastructure is vital for economic growth in this region. While we do not have specific comments today on transportation funding strategies – we view transportation funding as an important part of economic growth and vital to the agricultural markets.