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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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December 11, 2020

Mr. John Harju  
Vice President for Strategic Partnerships  
Energy & Environmental Research Center  
15 North 23rd Street, Stop 9018  
Grand Forks, ND 58202-9018

Dear Mr. Harju,

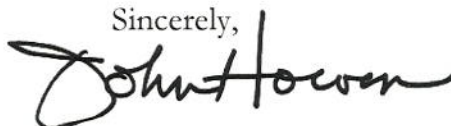
I am writing to express my support for the application submitted by the University of North Dakota's (UND) Energy & Environmental Research Center (EERC) to the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Carbon Ore, Rare Earths, and Critical Minerals (CORE-CM) Initiative. Thank you for advancing this important effort.

As you know, the state of North Dakota provides a vast array of critical resources for the United States. As the largest U.S. producer of seven agricultural products, a global leader in developing unconventional oil, and the producer of some of the most affordable and reliable electricity in the nation, our state has demonstrated its ability to support the growth and prosperity of the United States.

The opportunity to develop a domestic source of rare-earth elements and other critical minerals is of vital importance to our national security. Efforts like this have been underway in our state since my time as Governor of North Dakota. In 2007, we created the EmPower ND Commission focused on increasing energy production from, and adding value to, our state's abundant resources. To this end, the EERC is proposing to advance the production of rare-earth elements, critical minerals, and other carbon products from North Dakota lignite. Doing so would provide an incredible opportunity for economic diversification and growth in the region, supporting the creation of good jobs, securing an important revenue stream for our state's coal producers and ensuring a reliable source of these essential materials for the U.S. technology sector.

Accordingly, the EERC's Williston Basin CORE-CM application carries my full support, and I hope it receives the DOE's favorable consideration. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. Please keep me informed of the review process, and feel free to contact my office if I may be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven  
U.S. Senator