Bill Brief for HB1037 – An Act to authorize the Board of Regents to contract for the construction of a regional sports complex at Northern State University and to make an appropriation therefor.

What does this bill do?

This bill authorizes construction of a Regional Sports Complex on the campus of Northern State University. Dacotah Bank Stadium (for football) and Koehler Hall of Fame Field (for softball) will be built south of the Barnett Center, where the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired is currently located. Last year, the Legislature approved House Bill 1071, which authorized a land exchange between NSU and the special school upon completing construction of the new School for the Blind.

Why is it necessary?

- A Regional Sports Complex will significantly enhance the student experience, serving as a hub of activity for many campus and community events. It has the potential to host high school sporting events and concerts, help enrich student development, and further strengthen the campus and community partnership.

- The Regional Sports Complex is the third and final project of the Educational Impact Campaign. In November 2017, NSU and the NSU Foundation announced the $45 million Educational Impact Campaign. As of January 2019, more than $46 million has been pledged toward a revised campaign goal of $55 million. The three projects funded through the campaign are:

  1) New South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, currently under construction with a late fall 2019 completion date;
  2) New Athletic and Recreation Fields, completed fall 2018;

- The Educational Impact Campaign provides the necessary funding now to upgrade campus facilities. NSU football last competed on campus in the early 1900s. Softball has never competed on campus. An on-campus stadium will serve students and the region for generations to come.

What is the status of the project?

The Facility Program Plan for the Regional Sports Complex was approved by the Board of Regents last December. NSU is prepared to move forward with a final facility design, with anticipated construction starting later in 2019.

In September 2018, the Aberdeen City Council vacated a portion of 15th Avenue, which maximizes the synergies between this new complex and the existing Barnett Center. The City of Aberdeen also has pledged $5 million to support the Educational Impact Campaign, reinforcing the importance of this project to the entire community.
What is the source of funds for this project?

- The project will be funded entirely through the Educational Impact Campaign. The NSU Foundation has guaranteed up to $33 million to fund this project. Estimated total cost of the Regional Sports Complex is $33 million.
- Construction will not begin until commitments have been received for the entire project cost.
- The university will incur no debt to generate funds for construction of this facility.
- Maintenance and repair will be funded with revenues generated by facility operations, including new game day and season ticket sales, advertising, game day parking passes, and premium seating sales.