

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2208

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A BILL for an Act to create and enact six new sections to chapter 61-16.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to procedures for drain permits, assessments projects, and operations of water resource districts; to amend and reenact subsection 1 of section 54-57-03, sections 61-02-01.4 and 61-05-02.1, subsection 3 of section 61-16-08, section 61-16.1-02, subsection 16 of section 61-16.1-09, and sections 61-16.1-09.1, 61-16.1-09.2, 61-16.1-15, 61-16.1-17, 61-16.1-18, 61-16.1-19, 61-16.1-20, 61-16.1-21, 61-16.1-22, 61-16.1-23, 61-16.1-24, 61-16.1-26, 61-16.1-27, 61-16.1-28, 61-16.1-29, 61-16.1-30, 61-16.1-31, 61-16.1-32, 61-16.1-33, 61-16.1-34, 61-16.1-39.2, 61-16.1-42, 61-16.1-43, 61-16.1-45, 61-16.1-46, 61-16.1-47, 61-16.1-48, 61-16.1-54, 61-16.1-62, and 61-16.1-63 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to assessment projects, operations of water resource districts, and removal of obsolete text; to repeal sections 61-16.1-01 and 61-16.1-61 and chapters 61-21 and 61-32 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to assessment drains, drain permits, noncompliant drains, and obsolete provisions; and to provide a penalty.

Senator Luick and Wardner and members of the committee:

My name is Kathy Marquette and I come to you today from Rutland, North Dakota. My purpose here is to voice my support of SB 2208 for landowners in North Dakota in the counties of Dickey and Sargent. Judy Ringdahl, and our family property located within Verner Township, in Sargent County, are affected by Jackson Improvement Drain and Drain 11.

- A. Background on Jackson Improvement Drain
- B. Assessments are payable over 20 years
- C. Landowners were blindsided by the project.
 - a. Transparency by local water board, joint Dickey Sargent Water Board and Sargent County Commissioners was not present.
- D. Landowner's rights with respect to multi-million dollar projects need to be safeguarded.
- E. Ringdahl land:
 - a. 16 parcels including 1718 acres:
 - i. \$13,024.20 for property taxes for 2020
 - ii. \$14,296.37 for Jackson Drain for 2020
 - 1. Paying more in drain assessments than property taxes; 20 year commitment
 - 2. 12.5% to 100% assessments based on "benefits" of the drain