

## Testimony in support of SB 2018 - The Department of Commerce Budget

Given by  
Brad Barth  
Executive Director  
Forward Devils Lake Corporation

*Chairman Holmberg and members of the Appropriations Committee I am pleased to be able to offer my testimony today on behalf of the Department of Commerce.*

*The City of Devils Lake respectfully requests that you continue to support the Department of Commerce in their efforts to administer and manage the Renaissance Zone program. Devils Lake has successfully used the Renaissance Zone program to help with the revitalization of our downtown/RZ area over 20 times during the years we have had the RZ. The increased taxable property value for these projects is over \$8 million dollars - a significant increase for a City of our size.*

*We continue to use this program as one of the tools in our Economic Development incentives toolbox. In the two years I have been Economic Development Director for Devils Lake and Ramsey County, ND it has been a "go-to" incentive to help get buildings bought, refurbished, and used in our downtown revitalization area.*

*The need for a responsive timely administration team at the Department of Commerce is critical in getting businesses to use the Renaissance Zone program and we thank you in advance for meeting their needs.*

*Economic Development in rural areas like Devils Lake is difficult - but programs like the Renaissance Zone give rural cities and towns the capability to put incentive packages together that entice and encourage our existing entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs to "take a chance" on a project that normally would not happen. Without these incentives, projects would not get done.*

*Thank you for your support.*

*Brad Barth*