

Senate Bill 2301

Presented by: Brian Kroshus, Public Service Commissioner

Before: Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
The Honorable Curt Kreun, Chairman

Date: February 4, 2021

TESTIMONY

Mr. Chairman and Committee members, I'm Commissioner Brian Kroshus of the North Dakota Public Service Commission. I'm providing some individual thoughts on SB 2301.

I would like to express my support for the concept and intent of SB 2301, which is to promote the use of local workforce for infrastructure project construction in North Dakota.

I recognize there are potential language challenges related to SB 2301 as expressed in commission testimony, but I would encourage all involved to work to address those issues in order to preserve the intent and spirit of SB 2301.

While North Dakota is rich in natural resources, our greatest resource continues to be the people who live and work here. They take great pride in the work they do and make our state a better place to live, work and raise families.

The use of local workforce provides benefits beyond the immediate construction of a facility. The economic benefits include support for local communities and schools, reducing the outward migration of workers and their families to other states and providing opportunities for those just entering the workforce, including those born and raised in North Dakota.

North Dakota currently faces significant economic challenges and uncertainty related to our state's energy industry. An onslaught of unfavorable policy from the federal level will negatively impact the future extraction, production and use of fossil fuels.

As a state, we need to continue promoting the use of our talented workforce to help offset those impacts. The work local laborers provide is done with both pride and a strong sense of ownership.

North Dakota workers are often recognized as some of the best and hardest working people in the country. I would encourage companies doing business in our state to take full advantage of the services they offer.

With few exceptions, local industry workforce groups and their representatives have participated and taken an active role in numerous siting cases and hearings for projects throughout the state. Their interest and support of the North Dakota economy extends beyond jobs, it includes a desire to see our state advance and grow.

It would be appropriate to recognize the many local workers and their contributions to our state. They help move our economy forward and the work they do serves a common good all North Dakotans benefit from.

Infrastructure integrity and safety begins with the first shovel of dirt moved or piece of steel placed. Ensuring long-term system safety and reliability for any project, begins with proper training and necessary knowledge, held by those doing the work.

Again, as stated, nobody does it better than those representing North Dakota's talented and diverse workforce.

We must continue to do our part to recognize and support their efforts and further promote our state's greatest resource, the people who live and work here.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony.