

## Testimony to the Senate Political Subdivisions

March 26, 2021

Chairman Burckhard and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1483. My name is Aaron Birst and I am legal counsel with the association of counties. I have selected the opposition side but I believe this is an issue that can be resolved. I had previously testified against this bill in the House Political Subdivisions.

The original bill language was completely unworkable. As you can see under the original bill, Counties would not have been able to own a Courthouse, jail, motor grader, automobiles, land for road projects or any other public project. Thankfully, the House Political Subdivision committee recognized the deficiency of that bill and entertained a hoghouse bill.

After listening to the supporter's testimony and having seen some issues which have occurred over the years in all branches of Government, it was clear the concern was unlimited (non-voter approved) lease agreements for newly constructed buildings. The amended bill is an attempt to address that concern. If approved HB 1483, would limit Counties from entering lease purchase agreements for building that exceeded \$3 Million without first getting voter approval. The legislature has already established precedence for such a bill. Currently, NDCC 21-03-06.1(1) has the same restrictions for school buildings **with the exception being the dollar limit is \$4 million.**

This is the basis for our objection. NDACo believes in this case any restriction should be consistent with previous legislation and HB 1483 should be raised to a similar \$4 million dollar cap.

Thank you.