

Chairman Heinert and members of the house education committee. My name is Mike McHugh and I reside in rural Morton County. I have been active in education for 20 years including 12 years in the classroom as a Career and Technical Education Teacher. I have also had the pleasure of serving on a variety of groups impacting education including Superintendent Baesler's family engagement cabinet, the ESSA committee and as of last year a member of the State Board of Public School Education and the State Board of Career and Technical Education. I am here today in opposition to section 1 of Senate Bill 2284.

This section of the bill appears to be a solution looking for a problem.

The structure of this board has been in place for a number of years without issue. When the appointment process was created in century code, it is clear that the framers found it valuable to include geographic representation, ensuring that the appointee is familiar with issues in the given set of counties close to where they live. This is different than many other state boards, which look first at other criteria. The largest issue with adding a requirement of having two members being employed by a ND School district and active members of the ND association of school administrators, in addition to two members being school board members on this six person board is that four of the six members would have a geographic criteria and an additional criteria. Since two seats are appointed by the governor every two years, it would make it impossible for an at large member to serve on this board if they happen to reside in at least two geographic areas. As those seats are reappointed this could continue perpetually in those areas. I also suggest that individuals such as retired superintendents may be at a minimum, equally qualified to fulfill these duties but would not be eligible if a seat is needing someone who is currently employed. While it is true that historically school administrators have had ample representation on the board, and I would anticipate this to be true in the future, codifying this along with the requirements of geography present a great challenge for the governor in making appointments and individuals seeking a position on the board. I appreciate input from a variety of stakeholders and find our current process nimble and this section creates a burden on the process.

Additionally, I don't believe that changing the appointment of individuals from counties to legislative districts solves any problems but does change the natural flow that we have for many issues in education which originate at the county level.

Finally, as you have heard, the State Board of Public School Education and the State Board of Career and Technical Education have been tasked with a number of additional duties in recent years. While it is important to have the perspective of administrators when making decisions, it is also important to have the perspective of individuals that are in industry. This is especially important on the State Board for Career and Technical Education.

This section has several issues. I will again mention that I have no objection to this bill if section 1 is to be removed. Thank you for your time and I stand for any questions.

Mike McHugh