

68th Session Testimony on 2037 for Senate Energy and Natural Resources

Chairman Patten and Committee, my name is Phil Murphy representing the ND Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA). Growers produce the bulk of our commodity in the eastern third of the state where drainage is essential due to the “bottom of the bathtub” geography we operate in. This committee has already heard the essence of opposition to the bill so my message will be kept to a minimum: We oppose this bill for reasons of expediency, cost and loss of local control. I will focus on the governance by stating that the current process operates as a time-tested dispute resolution protocol. During my last thirty years dealing with water in Township government, as a Senator who sat on both Agriculture and Natural Resources and in my current position with NDSGA, water projects have proven to arouse emotions in nearly every case. Almost always, someone is not happy with the result. I would add that probably nothing will ever change that. Now, Water Resource Districts, comprised mainly of farmer landowners, help the residents of their districts design and move water. This process of achieving a majority is done by voting up or down on the project. Meetings are held and opinions are shared. If most believe the benefits are worth paying for, the project passes. If not, the project does not take place as planned. If there is enough support, a different plan can come back until a majority is reached or it eventually will fail. Landowners know when a plan makes enough sense to tax themselves. The dispute resolution method or protocol in place is called democracy. Please support the current method and thank you for your consideration.