

TESTIMONY OF

**Josh Teigen, Commissioner, ND Department of Commerce**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Josh Teigen and I have the privilege of serving as the Commissioner for the ND Department of Commerce and by statute also the chair of the EmPower ND Commission.

I am here today in opposition of 2251 both as the Commissioner of Commerce and on behalf of the EmPower ND Commission as its chairman. The EmPower ND Commission was formed for the purpose of developing **ND's comprehensive energy policy for the state's diverse and growing energy industry**. The commission is made up of representatives from all the state's energy industries and is a model of how differing interests can come together for the good of an industry. Commerce exists to increase the overall wealth of the state and we do this primarily through the attraction of both capital and talent.

ND prides itself on being a business-friendly state. A state with a favorable regulatory environment, low taxes, and an approach that innovation trumps regulation. This bill directly flies in the face of the principles that we have used to build our state as a great place to invest and do business.

Both Commerce and EmPower ND believe this bill to be harmful to the future of our economy. There is so much opportunity on the horizon and by enacting policies such as this, we signal to the world that ND is changing course and taking a stance of regulation over innovation. The passage of this bill will cause us to lose critical investments that will contribute to a better quality of life and economic opportunity for all citizens of ND.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, on behalf of EmPower ND and the ND Department of Commerce, I strongly urge you to vote no on this bill.