

Testimony Prepared for the
Senate State and Local Government Committee
February 9, 2023
By: Al Heiser, Stark County Highway Superintendent



**RE: Support for SB 2370 – Relating to counties/cities to engage
in cooperative purchasing**

Chair Roers and members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Al Heiser and I am the Stark County Highway Superintendent and also serve as Past President of the ND Association of County Engineers. I am here to provide testimony in support of SB 2370.

Counties are required to bid heavy equipment over \$100,000. The process can sometimes be cumbersome, time consuming and difficult when bids are limited. The cooperative purchasing programs offer a competitive bid process, which is advertised nationwide in many cases and offer the contracts to agencies at no cost to use. This creates efficiencies for counties in the public procurement process.

Unfortunately, we have had some issues with how the Century Code has been interpreted with cooperative purchasing within our own counties. Some counties have been told by their States Attorney they can use these agreements, while other counties are told they cannot. With that being said, this option would simplify purchasing equipment that fits our needs and gives us more control on the quality of products we purchase. Surrounding states like Minnesota, South Dakota and Montana already have these cooperative purchasing programs in place. It would be great to include North Dakota in this list.

Chair Roers and Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and I ask for your support on SB 2370.