

HB 1396

Room 327C, 9:30 am, January 23, 2025

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

My name is Bob Banderet and I am from Cogswell, ND. I am a landowner in the infamous Drain 11 watershed. I am shocked that I even need to testify in opposition to this proposed bill. A local governmental entity is attempting to influence the outcome of a landowner vote by threatening retribution if the landowner votes contrary to the board's position! What could be more un-American or undemocratic than that!

When a drainage project is proposed for a vote, it is the water resource district's responsibility to convince landowners that the project is a good one and that benefit exceeds cost. That is what a vote should be based on, not retribution for voting against the project! You will hear testimony from the Water Resource District that it isn't "fair" for a landowner to vote against a project and still be allowed to drain into the Drain. But remember, that landowner is still paying the annual maintenance assessment just like all the other landowners and will be expected to pay the assessment during the 5 years when no permits will be granted!

Please don't let water resource boards run rough shod over landowner rights. Please give this bill a do not pass recommendation. Thank you!

Bob Banderet

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