

Chairman Ruby and Committee members-

My name is Art Hagebock. I own four weekly newspapers in southeast North Dakota. I am recently retired from being the fire chief in LaMoure for the past fifteen years. I also am an EMR and am a member of our volunteer ambulance service.

I am submitting this testimony in opposition to SB 2033. I am hoping that common sense prevails for this issue. As I read the bill, what is being called a "Distressed Ambulance Service" has no parameters in the bill that determine what a distressed service is. Some bureaucrat or paid consultant will determine if the service is deemed distressed or not. Then without any cost controls put in the bill, the consultant gets to charge the so called distressed ambulance service any amount they choose as there is no controls put in the bill. It also just assumes that they already know who the consultant is going to be because there is nothing spelled out on the qualifications or bid submittal process. The same person that is going to be making money on this is also the same person who has testified for this bill in the Senate. The testimony about the EMS Board representing everyone is wrong. The board has only two members that are from small volunteer services. The rest of the board is made up of larger services and private services. All but the two representatives on the board come from services that will gain financially from this process as it stands right now.

In my opinion, all five bills relating to ambulances circle back to a small group of either individuals or businesses to make financial gain.