

Good morning, Madam Chair Roers and members of the State and Local Government Committee.

My name is Austen Schauer, representing District 13 in West Fargo.

House Bill 1162 seeks to place the **Mayor of West Fargo** on the **Lake Agassiz Water Authority** (LAWA) Board of Directors.

The **LAWA** Board plays a critical role in shaping water policy and infrastructure for our region—decisions that directly affect the future of our communities.

Currently, the West Fargo Mayor serves as an *associate* member of the board, a status that allows participation but **no voting power**.

This arrangement made sense years ago when the city's footprint was small, but West Fargo has grown immensely over the past decade especially in its school enrollment.

This growth brings with it an increasing reliance on the board's decisions. West Fargo's water needs, economic vitality, and future development are deeply tied to the policies adopted by **LAWA** board.

Yet, under the current structure, the city has no formal vote, no true seat at the table. It is curious to note neighboring Moorhead in Minnesota holds voting power on the board.

While we recognize Moorhead is an important stakeholder, its influence should not outweigh that of West Fargo.

HB 1162 calls for the Mayor of West Fargo to become a member of the **Lake Agassiz Water Authority** Board of Directors. (Subsection 1b, line 9).

We ask for your support.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I am open to questions.