



March 21, 2025

Senate State and Local Government Committee
Senator Kristin Roers, Chair
HB 1307

RE: Testimony of Dr. Timothy J. Mahoney, Mayor, City of Fargo, in OPPOSITION to HB 1307

Chair Roers and Members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee:

As Mayor of the City of Fargo, I submit this written testimony in OPPOSITION to HB 1307. While election conformity across North Dakota's political subdivisions is a laudable goal, it is also an impractical one given the various election procedures that have been approved over time by voters to reflect the wishes and interests of our cities. This includes the City of Fargo, where our voters sought, and approved, the approval voting procedure for City of Fargo elections in 2018.

Since the "yes" vote for approval voting by thousands of Fargo voters in 2018, approval voting has provided the opportunity for our residents to vote for their choices in large, contested races that feature several candidates. In the 3 City of Fargo elections in which approval voting has been successfully used since its approval in 2018, there have been no voter concerns or confusion with the procedure. Fargo's voters have understood how it works and have elected the candidates they have felt best represent their interests to serve on the Fargo City Commission.

Approval voting has provided Fargo voters with a fair and understandable way to sort and prioritize candidates in crowded candidate fields. In a city of this size, the cost of "run-off" elections, as an alternative, is unreasonable from a cost and election administration perspective. Approval voting has created a cost-effective method for our voters to make their wishes known without burdening the taxpayer with additional election costs. Approval voting has not dissuaded voter engagement or the ability for residents to run for office. Rather, it has allowed voters to navigate multiple choices and to fully express themselves in the voting booth.

For these reasons, I urge a **DO NOT PASS** recommendation on HB 1307; or alternatively, an exception for Fargo to continue to be permitted to utilize its current procedure.

Dr. Timothy J. Mahoney
Mayor
City of Fargo