



North Dakota House of Representatives

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COMMITTEES:

Industry, Business and Labor
Government and Veterans Affairs

Madam Chair Roers and members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee, For the record, my name is Landon Bahl, and I have the honor of representing the citizens of District 17 in the North Dakota House of Representatives.

I stand before you today to introduce House Bill 1408, which proposes transitioning the North Dakota Legislature to annual sessions beginning in 2027. This bill takes a proactive approach to modernizing our legislative process while preserving the integrity of our existing framework.

Key Provisions of House Bill 1408:

- Maintains the 80-day legislative limit, this bill does not increase total session days but instead distributes them more effectively over two years.
- Shifts the legislature to annual sessions starting in 2027.
- Limits each year's session to 70 calendar days, with adjournment likely by early March.
- Provides flexibility in structuring sessions under the jurisdiction of legislative management per the amendment passed out with my testimony.
- Results in a fiscal note reduction for the biennium.

Broader Positive Impacts of House Bill 1408:

- Enhances fiscal and economic responsiveness by allowing more timely decision-making.
- Addresses the challenges of term limits by helping legislators gain experience more efficiently, ensuring continuity of governance.
- Strengthens the legislative branch to ensure it remains an equal branch of government, which would further preserve institutional knowledge and improve policymaking.
- Improves interim committee effectiveness through enhanced research, analysis, and public engagement, leading to more well-developed and thoroughly vetted policies.
- Attracts high-quality legislative candidates by making public service more accessible. Annual sessions would allow more North Dakotans, especially those unable to commit to four months at a time to serve, fostering a more experienced, diverse, and representative legislature.

Madam Chair Roers and members of the committee, House Bill 1408 strengthens our legislative process, improves decision-making, and ensures long-term efficiency in government. I urge you to support this effort to build a more effective and accountable legislature for the people of North Dakota.

Thank you for your time, and I welcome any questions.

Regards,
Landon Bahl