

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I would like to start by disclosing, I am currently a North Dakota state government employee, but I am speaking as a North Dakota citizen in regard to this testimony.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer neutral testimony on the proposed amendment to Section 54-03-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to annually reconvened sessions of the Legislative Assembly.

As you consider this bill, I urge the committee to ensure that any change in the legislative schedule continues to reflect the foundational principle of limited, responsible government—a value central to the North Dakota Republican Party platform and widely supported by the citizens of this state.

My concerns surround the amount of bills being filed, and the return of failed legislation biennium after biennium.

There needs to be assurance that meeting every year will not just double the amount of bills seen in a biennium. In this session there were 620 bills filed by the House and 400 filed by the Senate. I am concerned the legislature will now file around 1000 bills every year and have a limited amount of time to review and amend them. This will lead to sloppy legislation and legislatures making uninformed decisions.

Another concern I have is consistency of the similar legislation returning biennium after biennium. An easy example of this is time-zone legislation. The public takes time to inform and testify to the legislature, and a piece of legislation does not pass, only to have similar legislation be proposed the next biennium. I am concerned that failed legislation will return year after year which would just cause more of a burden to the public.

To align with the principles of limited government, fiscal responsibility, and legislative accountability, I respectfully ask the committee to consider amendments or internal rules that preserve deliberation and prevent legislative bloat under this new calendar.

Thank you for your time and commitment to good governance.

Danielle Kappel