



February 12th, 2021

Dear Chairman Kasper and Members of the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee:

The North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) strongly opposes HB 1289, which would change North Dakota's definition of a qualified elector and require citizens to have resided in the state of North Dakota for at least one year and in their respective precinct for ninety days.

The NDSA represents North Dakota's 45,000 public college and university students, spread across all eleven of the North Dakota University System's institutions. Our organization meets once a month and is comprised of voting representatives from all eleven institutions. I am providing this testimony in opposition of HB 1289 on the behalf of our General Assembly. If enacted, during each election cycle this legislation would potentially disenfranchise thousands of higher education students in the State of North Dakota.

We discussed this bill at length during our most recent meeting and concluded it would detrimentally impact the ability of students to vote in the state of North Dakota in federal, state, and local elections. Our decision and arguments are outlined in our approved resolution "NDSA-10-2021: A Resolution in Opposition of Changing Residency Requirements for Eligible Voters in North Dakota," which is attached as part of our testimony.

The nature of higher education is that students often move across city, county, and state lines in order to attain a degree in the field of their choice. A large majority of those students move to their college communities in August, before the new academic year begins, and many of these students go on to claim residency in North Dakota or reside in the state for at least nine months of the year. These students have the right to vote in the community and state where they will be investing years of their lives, and as an organization we have historically worked diligently to encourage student voting and civic participation.

On the behalf of the North Dakota Student Association and the 45,000 higher education students in North Dakota, we urge the committee to vote **do not pass** on HB 1289.

Sincerely,
Gracie Lian
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North Dakota Student Association
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