

Senate Human Services Committee

Testimony of Representative Gretchen Dobervich D11

Senate Bill 2036

A BILL for an Act to provide for a legislative management study regarding access to lands and electronic posting.

Senate Bill 2144

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact sections 12.1-22-03 and 20.1-01-17 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to criminal trespass and electronic posting; and to provide a penalty.

Good Morning Chairman Porter and Members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee. For the record my name is Representative Gretchen Dobervich and I represent District 11 in Fargo.

I stand before you today in support of Senate Bill 2036 and 2144 filed by the Interim Energy and Natural Resources Committee, of which I was a member.

In the 2019 Legislative Session, the House Agriculture Committee, which I was privileged to serve on, worked tirelessly to develop a bill that met the wishes of landowners and outdoors enthusiasts in an effort to address trespassing, while not stifling opportunities to enjoy all the North Dakota outdoors has to offer. Citizens and special interest groups representing various perspectives on the issues surrounding the issue provided passionate testimony, in person and in writing. The House Agriculture Committee held several hearings and formed subcommittees.

A pilot project was put in place, and one of the counties selected to participate was my home, Slope County. I grew up on a farm and ranch south of the Rainy Buttes. You can see White Butte, our State's tallest point, from the front yard. When it came time for my Dad to repost our land I asked if he would be willing to try the online posting and let me know what he thought of it as a landowner and a hunter.

His feedback was that it was easy to use, all parcels of land he was posting were easily found and loaded into the database, and after he was finished he went back into the system and everything he had posted showed up correctly. The only negative feedback he had was that after he electronically posted the first section of land it was difficult to go back and post another. However, not so much so that it was a deterrent to continue. After electronically posting he drove around and physically posted all the land.

While he had a good experience, my Dad is a focus group of one. My evaluation of his experience is clearly not rigorous enough to determine that the pilot was a success, especially since he hunts on his own land, so from a hunter's perspective it worked fantastic in his

situation. For this reason, I support the passage of Senate Bill 2036, to continue to expand the electronic posting and assess the efficacy of the program in addressing trespassing violations and assuring access to outdoor activities.

In addition to Senate Bill 2036, I also support 2144, also brought forward by the interim Energy and Natural Resources Committee based on our learnings and in collaboration with various stakeholders.

Chairman Porter and Members of the House Natural Resources Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to speak before you this morning and will stand for questions.