



February 11, 2021
House Political Subdivisions
Rep. Dockter, Chairman
HB 1379

Chairman Dockter and members of the Committee. For the record, Blake Crosby, Executive Director, North Dakota League of Cities.

I am testifying in support of HB 1379, including the amendments. The bill basically has two parts. One part being to move state aid distributions from a quarterly basis to a monthly basis. This will help cities and counties with their cash flow and cash management. I did ask the North Dakota Treasurer's office if they could distribute funds on a monthly basis and they confirmed. Ryan Skor, Director of Finance, for the Treasurer's office is available for any questions you may have of that office.

The second part of bill, the amendments part, has to do with the delay in receiving 2020 Census numbers and distribution of State Aid funds based on most recent census data.

In 2015, NDCC § 57-39.2-26.1, was amended to distribute State Aid based on the most recently published Census population numbers, whether those numbers are the most recent decennial Census count, or the Census estimate numbers from the American Community Survey (ACS). The 2015 amendment was only effective through July 2021. If that provision expires, the distribution will be based on the most recent Census count (2010).

The latest information from the Manger of the North Dakota Census Office indicates the 2020 U.S Census data may not be available until the end of August. If that happens, and without this amendment, the State Aid distributions would revert to being distributed based on 2010 Census numbers. For most cities, especially the smaller ones, the distribution would be a substantial reduction from the amount that was projected in their 2021 budget.

The amendment to HB 1379 would eliminate the effective date on State Aid distributions being made based on the most recently published Census populations, either actual Census numbers or estimates.

I respectfully ask for a DO-PASS on HB 1379 as amended. Thank you for consideration and I will try to answer any questions.