

Testimony: Ed Gruchalla

Good Morning Mr. Chairmen and Members of the Industry Business and Labor Committee

I am here to testify in support of SB2295. This bill will change the direction of Energy production in ND. It will also give the Citizens of the State the right to choose where their electricity comes from. If an individual decides to build her own electricity production facility, she should be free to do so. We pride ourselves in our freedoms in this State.

I live very close to Moorhead, MN so I see what has happened there. Several years ago their electricity provider decided to try wind power. They asked their citizens if they would be willing to pay extra for their power. Enough citizens signed up to enable their Moorhead Public Utility to build 2 wind towers on the north side of Moorhead. They were paid for in a few years. Some years later they decided to ask their citizens the same question about solar. Again Moorhead citizens signed up to allow them to build one. Since that time, there has been such a demand for solar that they have built 10 more arrays.

Some friends of ours that live by Alexandria, MN decided to put up a 10kw solar array at their farmstead last summer and are very pleased with the results. Their Co-Op worked with them and charges them a total of \$50 per m month to be connected to the grid. This allows them to be repaid at the retail rate if they over produce. They will pay for their system in 9 years. After that their investment will pay them an income. If this same project was in ND it would take over 30 years to get a return on investment, because the Utility only has to pay them avoided cost or about 2 cents.

ND ranks dead last in solar electricity produced by State. Why? Are we clinging to the past when the only choice we had was coal fired plants? Carbon forms of power production will soon be obsolete. We need to move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The rest of the country and even the world is rapidly changing to renewables. Why? Because the citizens demand it. There are few new Coal fired plants being built because the large Banks will not finance them. They can see the future.

Utility companies were contacted regarding this bill and asked for their input. They refused. We would like to work with them to make a law that everyone agrees to.

Climate change is real, Elvis is dead, and the earth is round.

ND's last ditch effort to cling to the past is Project Tundra. Co2 sequestration doesn't pencil out. If it did the Coal companies would borrow from a Bank or finance it themselves. Instead they are attempting a back door deal to get taxpayer dollars to finance another Government boondoggle. Projects like this have been attempted in Canada, Texas and else where in the World. They didn't work!

When a carbon tax is implemented products that use carbon will increase in cost. This will make ND products (even Ag products) cost more and reduce their value.

The bridge fuel is natural gas. We should be converting coal plants to gas. This process would cut emissions greatly and help us transition to a renewable energy future.

This concluded my testimony and I will stand for any questions.

Ed Gruchalla

Fargo