

Chairman Kreun, members of committee

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Support for SB 2301

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony today. I am the Business Representative for Local 512. I cover the entire state of North Dakota. My duties as a Business Agent is to travel the entire state of North Dakota to talk to Local 512 members, Owners, End Users, and General Contractors. I must always pay special attention to the different websites like Dodge and the Builders Exchanges to stay on top of all future construction work. I then inform our local signatory contractors of future jobs in the steel erection industry to bid. When the bid letting day comes hopefully, our contractors are awarded a few of the projects they bid on. Usually, months later when the job starts, the contractor calls Local 512 for Ironworkers. I then dispatch our members to the jobsite to work and all needs are met. When that job is complete and the member is laid off, the member calls me to have their name entered on the out of work list, hoping to be dispatched right away to the next job.

Working as the Business Agent in North Dakota the last ten years has changed dramatically. From the oil boom out west, the possible closing of Great River Energy- Coal Creek Station, and Falkirk Mine. In 2011, we had roughly 45 members in the Ironworkers working at the coal fired power plants throughout the area. At the present time we have 3 working. During the oil boom we had workers here from Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and everywhere in between. Ironworkers Local 512 did not have enough workers to man the job and sometimes not the right qualifications for the job. At that busy time the out of state workers were very much needed and in demand. As of today, Ironworkers Local 512, have a lot of highly skilled and trained Ironworkers, due to past experience and the new training center. Good paying skilled labor jobs have gotten a lot harder to get lately, it is a shame the local people of North Dakota who are well trained and hard workers have no hope at all getting hired because of the out of state contractors, who are awarded the windfarms, refinery work, natural gas power plants, pipelines, transmission lines, etc. and continually bring with them their own work force. It is ok for these out of state contractors to come into the area, bid the job, and if they were low bidder awarded the job. It is okay for the out of state contractors to bring in their management and foreman level. The rest of the manpower needs to be our local people. North Dakotan's want to work in their home state to be able to build a future for them and their families. They want to enjoy what the state of North Dakota has to offer and most important employment.

I'm asking you to help ensure that the people of North Dakota should be used to cover the work in the state of North Dakota. We North Dakotan's, have laid down family roots, will help support our economy with the hard-earned money earned in North Dakota, just like their forefathers did before them. I urge the committee to pass S.B. 2301. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to testify.

