



March 25, 2021
Senate Political Subdivisions
Sen. Burckhard, Chairman
HB 1379

Chairman Burckhard 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 as it is before you. This is a very simple bill which moves 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 affirmed. Ryan Skor, Director of Finance for the Treasurer's office, is available for any questions you may have of that office.

HB 1379 was amended at my request so let me briefly explain my amendment.

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 estimated numbers from the American Community Survey (ACS). We get those ACS numbers once a year around May/June. The 2015 amendment was only effective through July 2021 and then would expire. With that expiration the distribution going forward, until we get 2020 Census numbers, would be based on the most recent Census count which would be the 2010 decennial numbers.

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

The amendment I requested to HB 1379 would only eliminate the effective date so State Aid distributions going forward will be based on the most recently published Census numbers which would be either actual Census numbers or ACS estimates.

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