



Cheryl Riley  
President, External Affairs  
Northern Plains States

AT&T Services, Inc.  
3709 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St.  
Sioux Falls SD 57106

M: 307.365.1379  
CR6557@att.com  
www.att.com

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Senate Political Subdivision Committee  
Chairman Randy Burckhard  
Oppose Senate Bill 2285

Dear Chairman Burckhard and Members of the Senate Political Subdivision Committee:

AT&T opposes SB 2285. We are concerned about the bill's provision to charge companies with fiber optic cable or related equipment on an easement or right-of-way every time anyone requests an abstract or title opinion on property in the state. For companies, like AT&T, who are already paying fees to be on the land, it is misguided to charge additional fees for title searches that we have not requested or are unrelated to our business. In our experience, it is far more appropriate to simply charge the entity that orders the abstract or title opinion.

As a telecommunications provider with miles of fiber optic cable and copper in easements, as well as rights-of-way, those costs for every title search would quickly add up. This legislation would add significantly to the overall cost of doing business in North Dakota at a time when AT&T is investing millions of dollars in the state to expand our high-speed, wireless broadband network.

North Dakota has always been a state that is open for business and encourages investment in technology. Unexpected costs, such as those that would be imposed by SB 2285, could have a chilling effect on overall investment in the state.

For these reasons, we oppose SB 2285.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Riley  
AT&T President, External Affairs  
Northern Plains States