

Testimony
To the
House Agriculture Committee
on
HB 1358

Good morning Chairman Thomas and members of the committee. I am Lisa Clute, Executive Officer of First District Health Unit. First District provides local public health services to Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, McLean, Renville, Sheridan and Ward counties.

I am in support of the addition of a local public health representative on the DEQ Advisory Board. When Committee work on the establishment of the DEQ was done, discussion regarding the importance of maintaining a strong partnership with local public health units occurred. The thought at that time was that local public health units would be represented as a county or municipal government. That hasn't happened. I recognize the value of a county or municipal representative and do not want to replace that with a public health representative. Hence, the addition of another member on the Board is requested.

Local public health units deal with a wide range of environmental health issues. Some our activities include Septic systems, air and water testing, we tested livestock water sources during the drought, environmental health emergency response and mitigation on events such as train derailments, flooding, etc. We conduct approximately 3000 water tests each year, primarily private wells. It is important that DEQ and local public health units are coordinating their efforts in response to any environmental health concern. Membership on the DEQ advisory board assures a better communication and coordination amongst the local and state activities.

I am sorry I couldn't be there today. Please feel free to contact me at lclute@nd.gov or (701)720-6200 if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.