

Testimony  
*To the*  
**House Industry, Business, and Labor Committee**  
*on*  
**SB 2253**

Good afternoon, Chairman Louser and members of the committee. My name is Allen Anderson and I'm the Director/Administrator for Walsh County Health District. I have been the director since 2021. Walsh County Health District has an agreement in place for Environmental Health services with Grand Forks Public Health. Their Environmental Health Practitioners serve our jurisdiction in relation to septic systems and other environmental health issues.

I am testifying neutral on SB 2253.

Establishment of a uniform code and technical guide in North Dakota would serve citizens the best. Protection of their health and safety and protection of their financial investments into their properties should be the priorities.

While it's very important to establish a uniform septic code and standards in North Dakota, this bill needs amendments to address all vested parties and adequately serve the health and safety of North Dakota residents. I will attempt to go through the areas of the bill where improvements would greatly enhance the bill.

1. It should be noted that Local Public Health has no desire to license septic installers. This can be handled by industry itself.
2. Section 2, "Statewide Technical guide 2.c." Circumstances under which a registered professional engineer shall prepare plans and specifications is an area where Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) should be involved as this is part of their regulations.
3. The Division of Environmental Quality needs to be more established in this bill in regard to reviewing the technical guide and then subsequently housing the guide under its administrative rules. DEQ brings the necessary qualifications and its own established regulations. Therefore, it's imperative to ensure that the technical guide does not conflict with established regulations. If the technical guide gets put into Century Code, then it can only be modified during legislative session. I feel that it needs more flexibility than this, especially given the wide variety of soils and situations that are encountered across the state.
4. Section 4 of this bill, under "Board - Appointment" would then put the installer majority in charge of the technical guide that Public Health is to enforce. I recommend the board be made up of 4 Public Health Environmental Health Practitioners, 4 installers and one Department of Environmental Quality representative for the code development and maintenance. This bill has written has many directives for Local Public Health but does not provide equal representation.

Thank you for your time. I'm available for any questions.