

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2366
HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MARCH 9, 2023

JUSTIN DEVER - SENIOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST, MDU RESOURCES GROUP, INC.

Good afternoon, Chairman Porter and members of the committee. My name is Justin Dever and I am testifying today in support of Senate Bill 2366 on behalf of MDU Resources Group and its subsidiary Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. Montana-Dakota serves 157 communities in North Dakota with electricity and natural gas.

We understand the importance of natural gas to families, businesses, and communities. It is an affordable way to heat our homes, cook our food, and power our businesses. Its availability it also a key consideration for many large economic development projects.

Montana-Dakota Utilities frequently meets with communities that are seeking to expand natural gas service to their cities. Unfortunately, many times the cost of extending pipelines to their communities proves to be uneconomic. We support an interim study that could look at ways the state could help address the challenges of getting natural gas to unserved communities. We stand ready to participate in such a study, as we have in previous studies.

I would also note that there are other efforts being considered this legislative session that could provide some assistance to extending natural gas to additional communities. This includes HB 1170 which provides a property tax exemption related to natural gas infrastructure being extended to unserved communities. Another effort is to provide additional ability for the North Dakota Pipeline Authority to take capacity positions in a proposed pipeline [Engrossed HB 1014 sections 18-21].

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to visit with you today.