

Good morning, Chairman Longmuir and Committee Members. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1236.

Political Subdivisions, Meets Thursday and Friday, Room JW327B

I'm Gerald (Jerry) Miller, I'm a Husband, Father, and after almost 33 years of service a Retired Combat Veteran. My Last Assignment was the 7th SCSM with oversight of the health and welfare of the 3500 NDNG Soldiers under MG Sprynczynatyk.

I've been a Soldier, a Carpenter, a Plumber, an Electrician, a Construction Equipment Operator, a Butcher, a Salesman, Delivery Person, Warehouse Worker, the President, Chairperson or Member of multiple organizations.

I've never been a resident of any state but North Dakota but have been away from my state for extended periods of time serving my country and state.

I've been a Township Supervisor since 2015, on the BoD of BCTOA and the District 5 Director of NDTOA since 2021.

District 5 consists of McLean, Sheridan, Burleigh, Kidder, Stutsman, Emmons, Logan and McIntosh Counties.

I'm currently a Fulltime Temporary Employee for North Dakota Department of Emergency Services Public Assistance Division as a Task Force Leader with a 10 person staff who write up ND damages into projects for FEMA Public Assistance Grants, FEMA-75% / State-10% / Local-15%.

I live in NE of Bismarck in Gibbs Twp, Burleigh County with my wife Linda HER GREAT DANE and our three 30+ year old Adult Children who live in our basement – My advice Change the Locks.

We own 40 acres and used to run Scottish Highland Cattle, Myotonic Goats, poultry and waterfowl.

Gibbs Twp Population is around 3K and has over 20 Sub-divisions. Our zoning is split between the Bismarck Extra Territorial Area and County, so now we have two zoning meetings we must attend monthly.

In my township we have three supervisors a clerk and a treasure. We comprise the governing team for the residents within our 36 sections.

For my township I'm the Overseer of Highways. In our 36 Sections we have over 70 miles of Paved and Gravel Roads, over 250 Road Signs, and residents who love to push stuff into the 66' right of way.

Annually I drive each of our roads as many as four times inspecting surface gravel quality, pavement cracks, potholes, chip sealing and in this season snow blockage.

Every time I drive our roads for any reason, I keep our residents in mind as to can Emergency Services get to them. Do we have a safe, quality route for them to drive?

To compound this is my township is split by I-94, 24 Sections on the North and 12 Sections to the south, but I'm lucky as I have two non-exit or entrance crossings and, in the future, the first interchange into the Bismarck-Lincoln area.

Besides being the Overseer of Highways I also receive complaint calls from our residents from dogs barking, to open burning of household trash, to the property owner hasn't mowed their lot to traffic is kicking up so much dust we can't sit outside...

Each of these take time away from home and work. I track them on a excel spread sheet using the odometer on my pick-up and the time off a clock. I've maxed out the \$2000 cap annually since I've been a supervisor.

I personally do not do it for the money, and I will never get rich on the township reimbursements but raising the annual cap to \$4000.00 and \$100.00 per day just may interest some new people to join in the governmental process.

I'm going to be 64 YOA in a few months and when I go to my other assigned counties association meetings, I'm the kid. I was told once by a fellow township officer at a meeting in Stutsman County there is only two ways to get off the township board, move to town or die.

We fully understand some townships will not fully use the cap or daily allowance and that is what makes Township Government unique and, in most cases, thrifty.

When I became a Twp Supervisor little did I know of all the things that will come across on our agenda, nor the laws, ordinances or rules we must follow. To learn and educate yourself takes time and energy.

Additionally, we township officers know not all townships meet on the 3rd Tuesday in March. We see the required notices in the county official newspaper with the incorrect dates.

Some must use an alternate date due to facilities availability or personal conflicts or Mistake in scheduling.

Whatever the reason there should be no penalty for not following a century code written when the Township Annual Meeting was a day of township folk to finally get out of the farmyard and gather for a potluck early dinner picnic. It could have been the first time you've seen the neighbor since the first snow back in October. It was a time when this gathering would be an opportunity to visit, discuss future crop plantings, equipment purchases, livestock swaps, where the next barn raising was going to be, or the next barn dance where young single people, our grandparents or parents met for the first time. It was a day to greet families who have been cut off all winter as their old horse couldn't transvers the snow drifts.

Alas those days are gone forever and in this new era where the farmer rancher also has a job in town to make ends meet or the landowners are now freeholders and renting out their lands to the next generation.

I ask the committee to please consider the bill a Do Pass and giving the townships some latitude in both date selection and funding.

Any questions of me?

Thank you!