

Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 2361  
January 30, 2023  
Senate Finance and Taxation Committee  
Bill Wocken on behalf of the North Dakota League of Cities

Good Morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Finance and Taxation Committee. For the record, my name is Bill Wocken, appearing on behalf of the North Dakota League of Cities in opposition to Senate Bill 2361.

This bill proposes to allow the full and true value of a primary residential unit to be frozen at the level existing on the date the resident files for this relief. The unit must be owned and occupied by the person making the election. The value remains frozen for as long as the owner retains ownership of the unit and lives there.

The League of Cities is concerned about the financial ramifications of this bill. The property tax received by a city is needed to provide services to city residents. Many of these services are especially important to our elderly residents. By freezing taxes, the city may face the awkward choice of having to reduce services or to increase taxes to cover the deficit caused by rising service costs and this freezing of taxes. We have no idea how many frozen valuations to expect.

If there is a citizen in financial need, it should be pointed out that the state Homestead Credit (NDCC 57-02) program can provide relief for those in need. This program is reviewed every legislative session to stay current with financial need factors and is very effective.

For these reasons the North Dakota League of Cities opposes this bill and respectfully requests a Do Not Pass recommendation from the committee. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have of me.