

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1459
Senate Judiciary Committee | March 7, 2023 | 11:00 am

Chairperson Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Jeremy Ludlum and I am the Parks Director for Williams County. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of House Bill 1459.

If passed, House Bill 1459 would add penalties for drug offenses committed in public parks. In Williams County, the Parks Department, under direction from the Williams County Park Board, oversees six parks that are open year-round. Five of the parks also have campgrounds.

Williams County is located in the heart of the oilfields. During the oil boom in the early 2010s, our parks were mostly frequented by temporary workers, many of which called the parks home. As time went on and more housing options became available, our parks once again became recreational havens for our residents and visitors alike. When visiting, the public expects our parks to be clean and safe.

HB 1459 would treat public parks just like public schools in terms of the penalties for drug offenses. Having safe and drug-free parks is just as important as having safe and drug-free schools. Families and individuals seek out parks to recreate, relax, and enjoy North Dakota.

Please consider a DO PASS on HB 1459.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Ludlum
Williams County Parks Director