

**Rachel Keohane**  
Golden Valley County Clerk of Court/Recorder  
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Chairwoman Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Rachel Keohane and I serve as the Clerk of Court/Recorder for Golden Valley County, which is a contract county. My testimony today is in opposition of SB 2277, which transitions contract county clerk of court offices to state employment.

I have worked in Golden Valley County for the last 10 years. I started in 2013 as a Deputy Clerk of Court/Recorder and in 2017 I was appointed as the Clerk of Court/Recorder until the 2018 election where I ran for the position of Clerk of Court/Recorder.


I feel switching contract clerk offices to state offices would hurt our community in the fact there may not always be someone in the office to help when individuals come in with questions or to file a case. It has been said that if we decide to stay with our county as an employee our deputy clerk of court would fill the vacant position as a state employee, which wouldn't work for the office here in Golden Valley County since the deputy clerk of court/recorder is also the deputy auditor who would stay as a county employee. So would the office sit empty until they can find someone for the position or would it just remain empty with bigger counties doing the work remotely?

We work very closely with our Sheriff's Office and State's Attorney and have very good relationships with one another which helps everyone have an ease with their job. This switch has been a concern for their offices as well on how things would proceed.

I feel unification needs to start at a higher level and it's not the fact that there are state court employees and county court employees. We all do the same job regardless.

In smaller counties where we have more than one roll we are still getting our work completed on a day to day basis. You learn how to prioritize what needs to be done and get it done and you stay until it is done.

Thank you for your time. I urge a DO NOT PASS recommendation on SB 2277. I have also attached our counties Resolution in opposition of SB 2277.



Rachel Keohane  
Golden Valley County Clerk of Court/Recorder

**RESOLUTION**  
**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING LEGISLATION MAKING THE**  
**GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY CLERK OF COURTS OFFICE A STATE OFFICE**

WHEREAS, there is legislation being proposed pertaining to the transition of contract County Clerk services to State funding and other legislative priorities;

WHEREAS, such legislation would make the Golden Valley County Clerk of Courts Office a State Agency and the employees thereof State employees, which would take away local control and governance of such office and employees;

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners for Golden Valley County, North Dakota, is desirous of keeping the Golden Valley County Clerk of Courts Office as a County Office.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for Golden Valley County, North Dakota, that the following resolution be adopted as follows:

- 1.) That the Board of County Commissioners of Golden Valley County directly opposes the passage of legislation pertaining to the transition of contract County Clerk services to State funding and other legislative priorities; and
- 2.) That the Board of County Commissioners of Golden Valley County resolves to keep the Golden Valley County Clerk of Courts Office a County Office.

The majority having voted in favor of the motion and the motion having carried, the resolution was duly adopted on January 11, 2023.

APPROVED:

  
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Adam Smith, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
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Tamra Sperry, Auditor