

Testimony
HB 1074—Department of Water Resources
Senate Energy and Natural Resources
Senator Dale Patten, Chairman
March 2, 2023

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Chris Bader. I am the Director of the Water Appropriation Division of the Department of Water Resources. I am here in support of HB 1074.

This bill will amend and reenact sections 61-04-01.1, 61-04-05, and 61-04-05.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, as it relates to informational hearings for water permit applications. This bill changes 'informational hearing' to 'public hearing' to clarify the purpose of the hearing as an opportunity for the public to submit additional comments on a water permit application.

The current language creates confusion regarding the purpose of the hearing. Historically these hearings have consisted of the Department collecting information from the public to be considered for a water permit application. Today, based upon the current language, people that may attend the informational hearing may be expecting to be provided with additional information pertaining to the specified water permit application from the department. Changing the title to public hearing will clarify the purpose of the hearing as an opportunity for the public to provide additional comments and information for consideration in the evaluation of a water permit application.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.