

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

HB 1358

March 9, 2023

Chairperson Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

I am, Erin Ourada, the administrator and a registered environmental health specialist at Custer Health, the local public health unit that covers Grant, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, and Sioux Counties. I am providing testimony in support of HB 1358 which would designate a local public health representative on the environmental review advisory council.

We employ environmental health practitioners that work in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to provide a variety of environmental health services to the citizens of North Dakota. Some examples of these environmental health services are air quality issues regarding open burning, mold, and radon; noncommunity water quality inspections; abandoned auto projects through the solid waste program; drinking water concerns; and more. Citizens, cities, and counties rely on coordination of these projects between local environmental health teams and DEQ in order to receive accurate and efficient response to concerns.

Local public health representation on the environmental review advisory council would increase communication between state and local partners. This increase in communication would streamline response to environmental concerns and create a healthier state for all North Dakota citizens to enjoy.

I respectfully urge you to support HB 1358 and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Erin Ourada
403 Burlington St SE
Mandan, ND 58554
701-667-3370