

Testimony – HB 1285
Senate State and Local Government Committee
March 24, 2023
By Cody Schulz
Director, ND Parks and Recreation

Chairman Roers and members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee, my name is Cody Schulz. I am the Director of the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department and I offer this testimony in opposition to HB 1285.

North Dakota Parks and Recreation is one of the many agencies that has benefited from Joint Rule 208 that has allowed us to pre-file agency bills in advance of legislative session. Like many other agencies, the North Dakota Parks and Recreation department finds itself especially busy during legislative session and passage of HB 1285 would result in our department dedicating more time and resources to the legislative process, time that could be better spent focused on operations and enhancing the value of our offerings to the citizens of our great state. North Dakota Parks and Recreation's agency bills are often technical in nature and require a great deal of institutional knowledge and we spend significant time and effort explaining bill content and outcomes to the respective committees to which our bills are assigned. If passed, HB 1285 will require agencies to "double up" on these efforts, both explaining the bills during the sponsor solicitation process, and in committee. Executive branch agencies currently have the option to solicit legislative sponsorship, and frequently use that option. I have great respect for the duties, responsibilities and powers of the legislative branch, and no matter how a bill is introduced the legislative assembly has ultimate power and authority to pass or defeat any bill that comes before it.

In conclusion, the current process and requirements have proven to be an effective and efficient measure for state agencies, the legislative body, and legislative council. Removing this process through HB 1285 will create more red tape for State Agencies participating in the legislative process.

On behalf of North Dakota Parks and Recreation, I respectfully recommend HB 1285 receive a Do Not Pass.

Thank you for your time; I am happy to stand for any questions you may have.