

**Testimony of Shannon Schutt
North Dakota Recreation & Park Association
To Senate State and Local Government
In Support to HB 1293
Thursday, March 16, 2023**

Chair Roers and Members of the Committee, my name is Shannon Schutt, and I am the executive director of the North Dakota Recreation & Park Association (NDRPA). We represent more than 900 members, primarily park districts, and work to advance parks, recreation and conservation for an enhanced quality of life in North Dakota. We are in support of HB 1293.

Under current law, city council members, city commissioners and park board commissioners are elected the second Tuesday in June. Just two weeks later, on the fourth Tuesday of June, they are required to take office and hold their organizational meeting. State law also requires a canvas of votes within 13 days of the election.

These dates do not allow sufficient time for a recount of votes if necessary. Nor do they provide time before the city or park board's organizational meeting for appointments if an elected individual is no longer able to serve in that position.

HB 1293 would allow city council members, city commissioners and park board commissioners to take office July 1 and then hold their organizational meetings at their first meeting in July. Moving the dates to July would also provide time to canvas votes or for additional appointments if necessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for HB 1293.