

Written Testimony for the
Senate State and Local Government
January 26, 2023
Erika White, Burleigh County Election Manager



RE: SUPPORT for SB 2292

Good Morning, Chair Roers, and members of the Committee. My name is Erika White and I am the Election Manager in the Burleigh County Auditor/Treasurer's office. I'm here this morning in support of SB 2292, with proposed amendments, which provides additional protections for election boards while simultaneously allowing access to election observers.

Currently, state law addresses election offenses such as voting another person's ballot, voting more than once in any election, voting when not qualified, and many more offenses. However, there is not a provision to protect the duties of the election board which many election workers have requested.

Election boards are responsible for many things, including verifying the tabulators are secure and begin at zero votes on election morning, operations of the polling location throughout the day, and making decisions regarding voter qualifications. They are also responsible for balancing at the close of polls to ensure the total votes cast equals the numbers of voters checked-in at the location.

I believe we all agree that election boards are a fundamental piece of our elections and are relied on heavily to complete their duties securely and with integrity. SB 2292 will provide protections to election boards who may encounter individuals looking to disrupt election processes.

In addition to adding election worker protections to state law, SB 2292 addresses election observers and voter privacy. I firmly believe that election observers should be welcomed to observe election processes, but voters also deserve privacy.

In Burleigh County, we thankfully haven't had an issue with election observers infringing on voter privacy. However, it's been a talking point amongst election boards and addressing this in state law will equip the boards with the necessary support should they encounter an election observer infringing on voter privacy.

I am confident that election workers, auditors, and most importantly, voters will appreciate the foresight this bill addresses to strengthen election integrity.

Thank you for your time and I urge a DO PASS on SB 2292.