

TESTIMONY OF

Karl Rockeman, Director of Water Quality

Good afternoon, Committee Chair Roers and members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee. My name is Karl Rockeman, and I am the director of the Division of Water Quality within the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality. The Division of Water Quality protects and monitors our water resources to ensure the quality of surface and groundwater for public use. I am here to provide information regarding SB 2303.

The Department of Environmental Quality was requested by the bill sponsor to provide information on environmental concerns related to depth of groundwater below a basement.

One concern would be if a high-water table causes moisture problems in the basement. If a building exhibits chronic moisture control problems, it is likely to have or to develop a mold problem.

Another concern is specific to homes served by a septic system. Septic systems must maintain separation distance above the water table to provide proper treatment of wastewater and protection of groundwater. As basements are placed deeper in the water table, pump systems are needed to raise the wastewater from the basement level to the septic system.

Finally, for homes connected to municipal sewer systems, sump pumps used to lower the water table to keep the basement dry are sometimes discharged into the municipal system. This can cause capacity issues for the municipal wastewater treatment plant.

Committee Chair Roers and committee members, this concludes my testimony, I would be happy to answer any questions.