

Testimony opposed to SB 2303

Presented by Shawn Ouradnik

City of Fargo Inspections Director/ Building official and member of the North Dakota State Building Code Advisory Committee

Chairman K. Roers and Members of the State and Local Government Committee:

I'm Shawn Ouradnik the Inspections Director/Building Official for the city of Fargo North Dakota and a member of the North Dakota State Building Code Advisory Committee.

I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill SB 2303. Contained within the adopted Residential Code for the state of North Dakota is language that would address this issue. The North Dakota codes allows local jurisdictions to ask the developer or contractor to provide appropriate engineering reports to show the basement can withstand the hydrostatic pressures as well as showing how the system will dispel any unwanted moisture away from the structure. The engineer's evaluation would point out any deficiencies and propose actions to correct the deficiencies. This provision has covered this topic in the past and has a history of success.

This bill would also have a detrimental effect on smaller cities and towns within our state and affordable housing. It has the potential to eliminate the option of building a basement, a bi-level, or a crawl space and force a new homes to be built as a slab-on-grade only even if they have a design that can meet the demands placed on the structure. It would force an undue burden on new home owners with undue cost having to hire a soils expert to do an analysis and establish the water table. This could stifle the growth for the smaller areas and force potential home owners out of that market.

In some areas water tables can change from season to season or year to year. If the establishment of the water table were to occur during a time that the water table were higher then it may limit or suppress the ability to build an affordable home. Also, because the water table may be constantly changing, if the home were to be built during a time where the water table is low it would not solve any problem when the water table changes and becomes higher.

I urge a do not pass vote on SB 2303