

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 1289
January 27, 2025
House Finance and Taxation Committee
Bill Wocken on behalf of the North Dakota League of Cities

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the House Finance and Taxation Committee. For the record, my name is Bill Wocken, appearing on behalf of the North Dakota League of Cities in opposition to House Bill 1289.

House Bill 1289 seeks to add a new partial exemption to real estate taxes for caregivers. While this proposed exemption is well intentioned in giving a reward to those who care for relatives who cannot care for themselves, it does have a number of issues that prompt us to oppose the bill.

The proposed exemption has no monetary limit. It applies a fifty percent tax exemption for the premises where the caregiver lives. Castle or cottage, it treats them the same with no maximum credit stipulated. It also leaves ill-defined what care needs to be administered to qualify for the exemption. Does taking blood pressure once a week and providing living quarters qualify?

This proposal is noteworthy in that it attempts to reward caregivers for their diligence with someone else's care but it is potentially very costly in terms of the tax base that would be lost if the measure would be put into place. In the uncertain days of this session with the property tax being discussed in many circles, we feel this measure is unwise.

We respectfully request a Do Not Pass recommendation for House Bill 1289. I will be happy to stand for any questions you might have,