

Chairman Headland and members of the House Finance & Taxation committee. My name is Mike Blessum. I am a Minot resident and sitting alderman on the Minot City Council. I'd like to give you my perspectives on the property tax issues you will be facing this session. These thoughts are mine and are not the official positions of the City of Minot or other council members.

As elected officials we all know that the best route to better public policy is electing the right people. Lowering property tax depends on local elected officials making a concerted effort to lower the cost of government and pass those savings along to the taxpayer. With that in mind, you have the opportunity to make a difference for the people of North Dakota through the law.

House bill 1474 moves us away from ad valorem taxation for residential properties in the state. I believe this could be one of the best long term solutions to the ever increasing property tax bills in our state. This is an elegant solution that converts residential properties to a combination of land square footage and structure square footage to determine the share each property pays of the overall levy.

This straightforward change will provide a clear, transparent solution to the opaque nature of assessed value for our properties. Property owners will know the immediate effect on their property tax bills based on the percentage increase or decrease in the local subdivision budget. This is real structural reform and I ask you to return a do pass recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration. I would stand for any questions.

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