

House Bill 1297
House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Austen Schauer, Chair
January 28, 2025
Testimony in Opposition to HB 1297

Chairman Schauer and Members of the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee, I am Vicki Voldal Rosenau, a lifelong resident of Valley City, ND. Thank you for this opportunity to respectfully offer my testimony in strong opposition to House Bill 1297.

HB 1297 is superfluous proposed legislation that represents obvious overreaching by voices in state government that seek to curb cities' and counties' rightful control over local affairs. HB 1297's blatant attack on local control is exceptional. More than six years ago, almost two-thirds of the voters in Fargo opted to implement approval voting. What possible justification could there be for the state to nullify the voices of those voters?

However, this proposal is not "just" unneeded and anti-local-control; it is harmful in an even-broader way. At a time when rancorous divisiveness threatens the foundation of our democratic form of government, HB 1297 would disallow the very voting methods designed specifically to mitigate that divisiveness.

Both approval voting and ranked-choice voting do a superior job of electing winners who represent the preferences of the largest-possible number of voters. There is no justification whatsoever for disallowing those voting methods.

I urge you to unanimously recommend "Do Not Pass" on HB 1297. Thank you very much for your consideration.