

Written Testimony for the  
**House Government and Veterans Affairs**  
February 6, 2025  
Sally Whittingham, Dunn County Auditor/Treasurer

**RE: OPPOSITION for HB 1306**

Good morning, Chairman Schauer, and members of the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee. My name is Sally Whittingham and I serve as the Auditor/Treasurer for Dunn County. I stand in opposition of HB 1306.

This bill changes the current Open Records Request policy from one free hour of work per request to 40 free hours of work for one request each year to a citizen of the state. This legislation, in its current form, could become very burdensome on county officials and would result in the duties of the office being put aside to deal with extensive open records request. I firmly believe any person should have the ability to request any record they wish, but ask the committee to limit the scope as 40 hours of free time, in my opinion, is excessive.

Currently after the first free hour, the political subdivision is able to charge \$25/hour needed to obtain and redact any documents. This cost no longer covers the wages and fringe benefits for staff members. Should the committee wish to increase the amount of free hours for a given request, I respectfully request that the amount per hour is also raised, to allow political subdivisions the ability to recoup some of the costs associated with gathering and providing the requested information.

Additionally, there is no guidance in the bill as to what would be needed to prove the requestor is a "citizen of the state." Does this follow election laws for voter identification requirements, proof of citizenship simply by owning property in the state, or simply just a statement from the requestor that they are a citizen.

Due to the reasons stated above, I urge a **DO NOT PASS** recommendation on HB 1306 as currently written.