

**Do Not Pass Testimony  
of Doug Sharbono, NDGOP District 11 Chair  
on HB1446  
in the Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota**

Dear Chairman Schauer and members of the House Government and Veteran Affairs Committee,

I am testifying as a NDGOP District 11 Chair on behalf of the people that elected me and believe HB1446 is detrimental legislation. This legislation radically changes the methodology in which legislative candidates are placed onto the ballot.

No longer will districts be able to meet and endorse candidates to place onto the ballot. This bill will require the sole method of being placed onto the ballot to be by petition. This will not serve the people well.

This bill if passed will promote vast sweeping change to the mechanics of the parties. When I asked key members of the party if the sponsors had been in contact with them to review the bill beforehand, they indicated no outreach had been made as is customary for a bill of this magnitude. I object not just on the merits of this bill, but also the process of the sponsors not communicating with other key members beforehand.

The current legislative endorsing process is a very grassroots process where governance is gained by assembly and agreeance of the members of the party within the district boundaries. **ALL** the members of the district party are leaders. To even walk through a set of meeting doors, they are with varying degrees politically knowledgeable about the issues and party, even though they may not all agree on all things. They are leaders of their friend group, their family, their church, and/or their business. They bring this leadership experience to the district meetings and provide and endorse the candidates they think are best. This grassroots level is the power of the people and is a bottom-up method of securing governance. It is a healthy means of governance.

With HB1446, the traditional governance of the people through the time-tested process of an endorsing convention is removed and instead power is limited to candidates placed onto the ballot by petition. The petition process is not an easy effort, and I have respect for those who achieve candidacy by petition. They usually need lots of help in circulating petitions. This can be either paid or volunteer help. A candidate connected to top political money will have the best chance of success with funding to secure the help in gathering the necessary

petitions. This process will limit the amount of legislative candidates in the state. It arguably could leave vacancies in legislative elections, at which point an appointed representative from the current power structure would appoint more power to themselves. This type of governance model moves away from a representative republic and towards a dictatorship, which hopefully is benevolent to the people.

Please give HB1446 a DO NOT PASS.

Thank you,

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