



Eric Volk, Executive Director

ND Rural Water Systems Association

In Opposition of House Bill 1605

House Human Services Committee

February 3, 2025

Chairman Ruby and members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Eric Volk, and I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association (NDRWSA). Our vision is to ensure that all of North Dakota has access to affordable, ample, and quality water. NDRWSA is dedicated to completing and maintaining North Dakota's water infrastructure to support economic growth and enhance the quality of life in our great state. We collaborate with the state's rural and small water and wastewater systems to improve their technical, managerial, and financial capacities. Today, I am submitting testimony in opposition to House Bill 1605, which seeks to impose a statewide ban on drinking water fluoridation and introduce penalties for non-compliance.

Water system operators, with the approval of their governing bodies, should retain the authority to determine the appropriate chemicals for their water treatment processes. This decision has always been based on operational needs and a thorough understanding of the benefits and costs associated with these chemicals. If local citizens or members have concerns about water treatment chemicals, there are already established mechanisms for their voices to be heard. These issues are best addressed at the local level, rather than through a statewide ban.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on behalf of the members of the NDRWSA in opposition to HB 1605. We respectfully request a DO NOT Pass recommendation. Contact me with any questions, ericvolk@ndrw.org.