



Testimony in Opposition HB 1141
Presented to the House Political Subdivisions Committee
Prepared by Bernie Dardis, Mayor, City of West Fargo
Thursday, January 16, 2025

1 Mr. Chairman and members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee:

2 Please accept my opposition to House Bill 1141 relating to the use of
3 public funds to support private organizations involved in political advocacy.

4 This bill would prohibit political subdivisions from holding paid membership
5 in organizations such as the North Dakota League of Cities, Greater North
6 Dakota Chamber, Economic Development Association of North Dakota as well
7 as local Homebuilders Associations, Chambers of Commerce, etc. if they have
8 endorsed a candidate or supported/opposed a ballot measure in the past 10
9 years.

10 It is evident that the intent of this bill is to penalize membership or affiliation
11 groups who advocate for policies that benefit their members by barring political
12 subdivisions from participation

13 Advocacy in the best interest of their membership is a vital part of the
14 work of these organizations and, as members, our City does benefit from this
15 work; however, we do not spend any specific public dollars for advocacy.

16 Our City's investment in membership organizations is tied to the numerous
17 benefits offered and we feel that we receive a strong return on that investment.
18 Organizations like those listed about provide education, networking, data,
19 training, and resources to assist cities, counties, school districts, townships, etc. in
20 navigating state and federal policy and grant programs. The affiliation groups
21 we are a part of also bring together cities to identify best practices and to
22 provide a venue for agencies to easily connect and share information.

23 With this bill making it impossible for public entities to participate as paying
24 members, our cities, and our residents, would lose out on these resources and
25 benefits.

1 I urge a Do Not Pass on this bill to continue allowing cities, counties,
2 townships, school districts, and all political subdivisions to invest in these
3 important resources.

4 Sincerely,

5 

6 Bernie Dardis

7 Mayor, City of West Fargo

8 Executive Board Member, North Dakota League of Cities

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