



House Bill 1362 Testimony: In Favor
Hon. Jonathan Warrey, Chairman
House Industry, Business and Labor Committee

February 4, 2025

Chairman Warrey and Committee Members,

My name is Anna Nelson, Executive Director of Williston Economic Development. As is the case across the state, housing has become a priority within our department as lack of housing options has proven a hindrance to workforce and economic growth, so I am writing to you today to **support** House Bill 1362.

Here in western North Dakota, we have seen our fair share of growth over the past decade and a half due to the oil and gas industry. Ongoing growth in that industry and beyond has had a tremendous impact on our community, including more families moving here, more businesses moving or expanding here, and value-add industries taking shape which is a boon to the economy – but with that comes additional residents that need a roof over their heads.

We know that we have three very large projects in the pipeline which will bring up to 3,000 temporary construction workers and another 500 permanent jobs. This does not even take into account additional projects and organic growth that will, no doubt, increase housing demand. To date, we have low housing inventory, rental units that are in the 96%-98% capacity range, and a good number of shovel-ready lots – we just need the builders.

The cost of building and the lack of workforce, especially subcontractors, have greatly slowed new home construction across the board. At a time when the population is growing, this puts a strain on our current resources and underscores the need for a program to spur building activity.

In response to this urgent need, House Bill 1362 would give housing builders and developers a funding tool to reduce risk and increase productivity. Not only do we need homes, we need them to scale, and this funding would help close the gap for local builders and developers as well as attract new ones and ensure we can meet the demand of the growing population.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **DO PASS** recommendation from this committee.

Thank you so much for your consideration, and please reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Anna Nelson

Anna Nelson
Executive Director
annan@ci.williston.nd.us
(c) 701-651-8265