



North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives
3201 Nygren Drive NW • P.O. Box 727 • Mandan, ND 58554-0727



ND
Living

Phone: 701.663.6501 or 800.234.0518

Fax: 701.663.3745 www.ndarec.com

February 5, 2025

To: House Industry, Business and Labor Committee, Rep. Jonathon Warrey, Chairman

Re: Opposition to HB 1486

From: Zac Smith, communications and government relations director, NDAREC

Chairman Warrey and members of the committee, for the record, my name is Zac Smith, and I serve as the director of communications and government relations for the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives in Mandan. On behalf of the 17 distribution cooperatives and five generation and transmission cooperatives who are members of our association, I am testifying in opposition to HB 1486.

NDAREC opposes HB 1486 mainly because of confusion over the language and lack of clarity on what it hopes to accomplish. HB 1486 defines a “smart meter gateway device” in a way that applies to devices that manage energy usage, and not the meter itself. Energy management is generally done for the benefit of the member owner to help them save money or avoid demand charges when energy is priced the highest. Such devices can operate in a number of ways depending on hardware and applications but are often different than a meter itself. A meter is primarily used to measure usage for billing purposes. However, in the final sentence of the bill, it allows replacement of a “smart meter gateway device” with a “traditional legacy electromechanical meter.” This indicates a focus on the meter itself, which does not manage energy usage. Further, requiring the use of outdated technology would require additional staffing to go out to read meters and drive up costs for the member owner.

I have brought with me today, Greg Owen, engineering manager and Josh Schaffner, energy services manager from Capital Electric Cooperative here in Bismarck. These gentlemen would be able to answer any technical questions about smart meters and load management programs that their cooperative employs if it is useful to the committee.

I urge a “do not pass” on HB 1486.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 