



Testimony in Opposition HB 1306
Presented to the House Industry Business & Labor Committee
Wednesday, February 5, 2025

1 Chairman Warrey and members of the House Government & Veterans Affairs
2 Committee:

3 Please accept our opposition to House Bill 1486 relating to the installation of
4 smart water meters.

5 Several years ago, West Fargo utilized grants from the Federal Bureau of
6 Reclamation to implement a Smart Water Meter System in 11,958 properties. There are
7 many benefits to this system – most notably cost savings for residents, more efficient and
8 accurate billing and the ability for staff to easily identify disruptions to water service for
9 any reason. Smart Water Meters represent the modernization of municipal water
10 service; this system will help us ensure the maintenance and capability of our water
11 utility system into the future.

12 If HB 1486 is passed, cities will incur significant costs including the replacement of
13 current smart meters for the “traditional” meters described in the bill. Additionally, if
14 properties opt out of the smart meters, cities will have to hire meter readers to manually
15 collect information and would have to operate two separate processes for meter
16 reading collection and billing.

17 We understand where concerns with these meters exist and can assure residents
18 that the only information we are collecting is water usage by gallon. We are not
19 collecting data on how water is used. These devices are not connected to a home's
20 Wi-Fi or Internet and cannot connect to other devices within the home. In West Fargo,
21 we have a privacy policy to protect customer data, and we do not sell customer data.

22 We urge a Do Not Pass Recommendation on HB 1306 to allow cities across North
23 Dakota to continue to modernize our systems and provide cost savings and efficiencies
24 for our residents.

25 Sincerely,

26 Bernie Dardis, Mayor
27 Dustin Scott, City Administrator
28 Matthew Andvik, Senior Director of Public Works Services
29 Brian Matzke, Director of Public Works Operations