

Testimony Presented on House Bill 1486 to the

House Industry, Business & Labor Committee  
Representative Jonathan Warrey, Chairman

Troy Hall, Water Utility Director, City of Fargo  
Ben Dow, Public Works Operation Director, City of Fargo  
City of Fargo

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Chair Warrey and Members of the Committee,

The City of Fargo submits this testimony to the House Industry, Business & Labor Committee in opposition to House Bill 1468 because of the restraints it places on local water jurisdictions to implement effective smart meter programs. Smart meters are vital to water distribution modernization, they provide real-time information that allows a better understanding of water consumption for the utility and the customer. Water providers across the state are adopting smart meter technology as a means to reduce water consumption, lower water bills, prevent water theft and promote sustainability. Data collected by smart water meters can be used to detect consumer leaks, identify irrigation usage during droughts, and track water consumption trends over time.

A significant investment has been made by the City of Fargo in the implementation of smart water meter technology. These implementations were all made with the intent of a return through reduction in meter reading staffing, water loss prevention, and improved customer service. By enacting the added language to the bill Fargo would need to retain staffing and inventory, which would force the city to run two variations of meter infrastructure, increasing costs for the end users.

Local jurisdictions and the state have worked tirelessly to secure real drought prevention solutions for many communities. Smart water meters are a critical component to drought mitigation plans by way of monitoring water usage in real time. Real time data collection is the only way to truly monitor water use and provide corrective measures when drought prevention is necessary.

The City of Fargo encourages the committee to proceed with a “Do Not Pass” or provide for an amendment that excludes smart water meters from this bill.