

Natural Gas to rural communities
City of Parshall
January 23, 2025

Good Morning Chairperson and Legislative members. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on the issue before this committee for HB 1275. I am Kelly Woessner, City Auditor of the City of Parshall and I am here to represent our small community on the Ft. Berthold Reservation. We are located in the Bakken area and have constant flaring and waste of the natural gases in this part of ND. I attended the last session and testified for a study to be performed. We were asking the State of North Dakota to help smaller communities obtain support and funding to be able to utilize this natural resource for heating our homes. Well, we are a step closer. The cost of this venture is astronomical and communities like ours would need financial help. This advancement is a start.

Refineries still need to be built; transmission lines still need to be in place in order for infrastructure to be installed. I know that testimony during the last legislative session, there was discussion on transmission lines versus distribution lines. The way I see it is a line that gets a commodity to its final point means the same thing and if we can get these lines to the communities that are interested in installing natural gas for their residents, it will give them a reliable source for heating their homes.

North Dakota winters can and have been brutal, like this last weekend and pipelines are a sure way to get the people what they need for heating and everyday life. I have had a lot of calls because homes have frozen water lines that have broken for various reasons including that they have run out of propane. Natural gas won't solve the breakdown issues, but it could resolve the running out of gas issues. At this time propane and fuel oils are instrumental in heating most of the homes in small communities. There is no infrastructure to directly feed these commodities. It has to be trucked and hauled. In the winter months this becomes an obstacle for delivery drivers to get their product to where it is needed. Our community is constantly called in to remove snow for a propane or fuel oil customer to get their tanks filled. With a Natural gas pipeline into our communities, there would be less problems getting that needed commodity for heating or cooking. There would be no need to watch the tank and have to call out for a delivery and hope they arrive before your tank runs out.

The option for industry and businesses coming to our area in the State are limited. They look for the benefits of utilities such as natural gas, when they decide where to build. Growth and expansion with that commodity could open so many more doors and options for rural North Dakota and help our smaller communities grow. Natural gas may not be for everyone, but the future doesn't wait for anyone. Technology advances and waits for no one.

We have been in discussion to get a distribution line to our area including the communities of New Town, Parshall, and Plaza at an estimated cost of \$80,000,000. This does not put it into the city limits. Our residents then would have to pay for it to get on their properties. This proposed State funding is a start and would help benefit the communities that are interested in pursuing this needed progress to move forward.

Kelly Woessner, City Auditor, City of Parshall