

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1577  
RELATING TO THE CREATION OF A WASTEWATER  
INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM**

House Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Meeting Scheduled at 9:00 AM 1/30/2025.

Honorable Chairman Porter & Members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

HB 1577 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 23.1-07 and a new subsection to section 23.1-07-06 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to a wastewater infrastructure grant program and the duties of the department of environmental quality; and to provide an appropriation.

Wastewater collection and treatment is one of the most essential services provided by a city to its' residents. The City of Wahpeton sanitary sewer system includes 182,924 linear feet of sewer mains, 667 manholes, 12 lift stations, and 5 wastewater lagoons covering 77.1 acres with an estimated value of \$44.6 million. The per capita value of wastewater assets in Wahpeton is \$5,575 per resident. The annual maintenance costs are projected at \$668,000.

The city's adopted capital improvement plan includes \$10.9 million to be invested in the sanitary sewer system lift stations and existing wastewater lagoons. Capacity and efficiency are essential to minimizing wastewater odors, increasing economic development opportunities and being the being good environmental stewards of our residents' natural resources.

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality has been an excellent resource for the City of Wahpeton in the feasibility planning, design review, financing and construction of Wahpeton's wastewater system. The proposed grant program is an excellent tool to add to the financing toolbox for infrastructure. A 60% matching grant program greatly extends the funds required to service capital investments in essential wastewater assets.

I strongly SUPPORT HB 1577 in reference to the creation of a wastewater infrastructure grant program.

Submitted with high regard.

***Darcie Huwe***

Darcie Huwe, Finance Director/Auditor  
City of Wahpeton

