



NDSBA
**NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL
BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

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HB 1588
Testimony of Amy De Kok
House Energy & Natural Resources Committee
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Chairman Porter and members of the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Amy De Kok, and I serve as the executive director for the North Dakota School Boards Association. NDSBA represents all 168 public school districts and their governing boards. I write to express opposition to HB 1588 to the extent that it would allow political subdivisions—including cities, counties, or townships—to enact ordinances that are less restrictive regarding the possession of firearms or dangerous weapons at school-sponsored events on school property.

This provision, found at the bottom of page 4 of the bill starting at line 26, significantly undermines the authority of school districts in determining firearm policies on their own grounds. Schools Boards should be the sole governing body in making decisions regarding the presence of weapons at school-sponsored events, ensuring a consistent and carefully considered approach to student safety across all educational institutions in the state.

Granting authority to municipalities, counties, or townships to set their own regulations could result in a confusing patchwork of firearm policies, making it difficult for school administrators, parents, law enforcement, and the public to understand and enforce safety measures. More concerning, this provision could lead to an erosion of protections that currently exist to keep firearms away from school functions, jeopardizing the security of students, teachers, and families attending these events.

The safety of our schools is paramount, and allowing other political subdivisions to override established school district policies on firearm possession creates unnecessary risk and uncertainty. The NDSBA strongly urges this committee to amend HB 1588 to ensure that school districts retain exclusive authority over firearm policies on school property.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to oppose this provision and support an amendment that upholds the authority of school districts in maintaining a safe learning environment.