

Dear Chairman Longmuir and Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

We, Mayor Timothy Mahoney of Fargo and Mayor Brandon Bochenski of Grand Forks serving as the Chair and Vice-Chair of Lake Agassiz Water Authority, submit this joint testimony in strong support of House Bill 1162 to increase the number of board members representing cities with populations greater than forty thousand, located east of State Highway 1 and south of State Highway 200, from one to two.


This change is essential to ensure fair and balanced representation for North Dakota on the Lake Agassiz Water Authority board. While Moorhead, Minnesota, already has representation on the board, it is imperative that our state's largest cities Fargo, West Fargo, and Grand Forks have an equitable voice in decisions affecting the project. The inclusion of a second member would provide a stronger platform for North Dakota's perspectives and priorities in shaping the future of water resource management.

Fargo and Grand Forks together represent nearly a quarter of the state's population, and play pivotal roles in the economic vitality of the region. Our cities bring distinct, complementary perspectives on water resource challenges and opportunities. Increasing representation ensures these unique viewpoints are properly considered and allows the board to make better-informed decisions that reflect the interests of the entire region.

This bill is not merely about representation; it is about achieving equity and ensuring that the governance of the Lake Agassiz Water Authority reflects the population it serves. The addition of a second North Dakota representative for cities of this size will ensure that our state's voice is proportionally represented, fostering collaborative leadership and balanced decision-making.

We respectfully urge the committee to support this bill and thank you for considering this important measure. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or if further information would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Timothy Mahoney
Mayor of Fargo, North Dakota



Brandon Bochenski
Mayor of Grand Forks, North Dakota