

Board of County

Commissioners

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March 26, 2025

Chairman Brad Bekkedahl
Members of Senate Appropriations Committee
North Dakota State Capitol
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

RE: HB 1176 Testimony

Chairman Bekkedahl and Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

Mr. Chairman, my name is Robert Wilson. I am the County Administrator in Cass County and I am speaking in support of HB 1176 – with amendments that reflect the County Commission’s approved resolution. That resolution states the bill should be amended to, “***allow growth to occur at the consumer price index plus 2% - not to exceed 6% or no less than 2%, and allow political subdivisions to also capture half of their percentage of annual growth in population from the previous year.***”

The County understands this committee may be asked to consider amendments that will further restrict local government by strengthening the cap to a 2% cap on levies and eliminating the ability to exceed the cap. If that amendment – or any amendment that further impacts local government’s revenues - is approved, Cass County must oppose this bill.

It’s important to speak directly to the suggestion that Cass County is holding reserves in excess of \$100 million. This is simply not true. Cass County ended 2023 with an audited General Fund Balance of \$26.9 million. If requested, we will provide the 2024 audited General Fund Balance as soon as the audit is complete.

Cass County remains ready and willing to be a good partner in identifying the best way to provide property tax relief – which 1176 does and Cass County supports – and provide the elected and fiscally responsible Cass County Commissioners the ability to meet the needs of our growing and vibrant communities. Please remember, 66% of our General Fund expenditures support public safety, which includes the Sheriff’s patrol & jail divisions and the State’s Attorney’s Office.

Sincerely,

Robert Wilson
Cass County Administrator