

Testimony in Opposition to SB 2208

Matt Herman
Ashley ND

Chairman Patten, Vice Chair Kessel, and members of the committee, my name is Matt Herman. I'm a retired high school principal currently ranching in western Dickey County. I serve as the Clerk/Treasurer and code administrator for Spring Valley Township and am on the zoning committee for Dickey County. I testify on behalf of myself and stand in opposition to SB 2208.

On too many occasions (and one time is too many) as a principal it was necessary to deal with a bullying situation. In most cases, I attempted to approach a bullying situation as an opportunity for growth and learning for both the victim and the oppressor. For the victim we attempted to build skills in self-advocacy. For the oppressor, we attempted to build awareness of and respect for the individual rights of others.

Members of the committee, SB 2208 is a bullying bill. This bill oppresses the rights of individuals and local government to self-advocate through local zoning ordinances. Furthermore, SB 2208 threatens to inflict harm on those who attempt to stand up for themselves by withholding a funding mechanism crucial to development and maintenance of local infrastructure.

As I would tell a bully, your actions are wrong, they need to stop NOW, and you will not retaliate against the victim. The same is true with SB 2208. This bill needs a DO NOT PASS.

Thank you.