

Chairman Patten and Members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Erin Magrum, I am a county commissioner from Emmons County, a business owner, landowner and a law-abiding tax paying citizen of this state. I am here today to speak in opposition of SB 2208. I am just a humble servant, whether its my family, my customers, my constituents or my Lord Jesus Christ, I am here to serve. This proposed bill is an attempt to prevent me from doing my necessary service and obligation to the people of my county. There are times when the State of ND has sued the US government when we believe the Feds are wrong. There are times when the state is wrong, and the local subs need to be a check against the state just as the state is a check against the local subs. We are all responsible for the system of checks and balances in government. The local subs are the closest connection to the people and have a great understanding of what the people in their areas want and to take away the ability for us to defend our rights and property is a gross overreach and should not be allowed. The actions my county has taken were in response to landowners crying out for help because they felt threatened, manipulated, and/or coerced into contracts or proceedings with Summit Carbon Solutions and wanted help from their local elected officials. That's our job right? I swore an oath to defend the Constitution of the USA and the State of ND, and that oath pertains to the defense of rights of the people of Emmons County. The ordinances we passed were meant to protect our landowners and give them the abilities to negotiate in good faith knowing they had the support of their local government. We have never seen a CO2 pipeline before and needed updates to our ordinances as well as in other areas of energy development as they are coming in faster than we have ever seen. Our ordinances may not be perfect, but our hope was that our legislature would take notice and possibly amend some of their state statutes to reflect in some way the ideas we put forward. Instead, we are met with contempt and vindictive bills such as SB2208. We are now forced to defend our landowners INALIENABLE RIGHTS from the very government that is supposed to protect us. It would seem that between bills like SB 2208 and HB 1258, the state legislature is more concerned with industry benefits than their oath to defend the rights of its citizens. I was here two years ago arguing that the state needed to help the counties to manage these projects. Since then, all the industries have done is grow stronger and bolder due to the legislature's unwillingness to even budge on some of the setbacks and regulations to give citizens a fighting chance to defend themselves against these industrial giants. You may be bringing money into the state, but it is coming at the cost of our freedoms, and the local subdivisions are the only ones actually looking out for landowners because we are the landowners. If you were as bold toward corporations like Summit as you are towards your own people, more projects would probably get done with less fighting. We would feel like our government had our back and wanted to work with us and we wouldn't have to be so bold in defending ourselves. I urge a Do Not Pass recommendation from this committee because it is wrong to attack the very citizens you are sworn to defend and start looking at ways to meet in the middle with local subs to site and regulate these projects for the good of the citizens of this state. There has to be local control on these projects to ensure our voice is heard.