
SENATE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
SENATOR KRISTEN ROERS, CHAIR

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BY

MICHAEL HOWE, SECRETARY OF STATE

Chairman Roers and members of the committee, I am Michael Howe, North Dakota Secretary of State. I am here today in support of HB1138 which seeks to bring the timing of the number of days needed prior to holding a political subdivision bonding election into alignment with the timing of other election requirements provided for in statute.

The Elections Chapter – NDCC 16.1 – requires both candidates and measures that will be brought forward for consideration in an election be filed with the filing office no less than 64 days before a primary, a general, or a special election. These 64 days allows for voters to familiarize themselves with candidates and issues and provides appropriate timing for election officials to prepare for administration of an election.

NDCC 21-03-11, which deals with bond elections for counties, cities, and school districts, is the only section in code related to elections that allows for a time period different from the 64 days required for all other elections. Currently, NDCC 21-03-11 allows that only 20 days pass before an election can be held after the passage of a resolution or filing of a petition. This simply isn't adequate time for election officials to prepare for an election or for voters to seek information related to what they will be asked to vote on.

We believe that creating consistency and uniformity across all elections in North Dakota helps reduce voter confusion and increases public confidence in the process.

We urge your support of HB 1138 and are happy to address any questions you may have.