

February 5, 2025

**Senate State and Local Government Committee
SB 2308**

Good afternoon Madam Chair Roers and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tom Schimelfenig. I've been in the onsite wastewater industry for 47 years, and I've been licensed by the N.D. State Plumbing Board for 38 years.

I also currently serve as chairman of the Onsite Wastewater Recycling Technical Committee (OWRTC), established in N.D. Century Code during the 2021 legislative session. This is one of the committees that stand to be removed from service should this bill pass.

I am here to testify IN OPPOSITION to SB 2308.

I have been licensed through the North Dakota State Plumbing Board since 1987, the year the North Dakota Sewer and Water Service Code was first adopted. That document, 43-18.2 Rules and Regulations of Sewer and Water Installation, continues to guide our industry's practices today. It was derived from the Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC), which has been in existence for 80 years. The UPC was established by the The International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, a technical expert on plumbing and mechanical issues since 1926.

The OWRTC was tasked with developing a similar uniform code, this one to guide the design and installation of onsite wastewater systems across the state of North Dakota. The legislature also asked us to build a licensing program for installers. There is still work to be done, as there is no code in place or licensing program established.

I understand and respect that there may come a time when this committee is no longer necessary, and at that time I would support legislation such as SB 2308. After all, I support the sponsors aim to lessen our tax burden and minimize bureaucracy. However, the OWRTC is not funded by taxpayers other than a very minimal amount to cover mileage for committee members to travel. I respectfully ask that the legislature give onsite wastewater system installers the opportunity to finish the job we were tasked with doing.

I appreciate your time and consideration, and I am willing to answer any questions you may have.

Tom Schimelfenig
4380 7th St NE
Bowdon, ND 58418
(701) 650-8792

tompeggy@daktel.com