

2011 HOUSE EDUCATION

HB 1463

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1463
01/31/11
13357

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



MINUTES:

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: We will open the hearing on HB 1463

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: Sponsor. Testimony attachment 1.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Has the school construction project been taken to a vote of the people?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: No. All the plans I think are there and it's in the hands of the school board now.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Do you know the total cost of the project?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: The total cost is over 70 million dollars.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Do you know if the state has funded all or in part any other new building in the state?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: I do not believe they have. We will be breaking new ground here.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: That is probably a nice way of saying that.

Rep. Mark Sanford: First of all the state did give 500 thousand dollars to Northwood in 2009 as part of the local share FEMA insurance. It raises my question which would be what's the relation between the 14 million and the 70 million?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: The decision was that we needed to do some addition to an elementary school and the construction of an elementary school in the area where we will see 200 to 300 homes being built this summer. We thought we need to deal with that immediate area first

Rep. Mark Sanford: Do they have a building specialist?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: Yes they do.

Rep. Mark Sanford: Maxed out?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: It is being maxed.

Rep. Mark Sanford: So essentially the options would be the addition?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: Yes.

Rep. Mark Sanford: What is the total bonding in Williston and property value?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: Just under 110 and the bonding capacity about 9 billion dollars.

Rep. Mark Sanford: Would it be possible to get those figures?

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: We have Jerry Coleman coming down to answer some of those questions.

Rep. Lyle Hanson: One or two sessions ago West Fargo came in with a bill similar to this. Do you remember that?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: Yes.

Rep. Lyle Hanson: Was that bill spelled out that the school would be the only one that could qualify similar to this one?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: I'm not sure that it did. I think Rep. Alon Wieland from West Fargo was the only one that testified so I am certain it was aimed for his school district.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: It was Rep. Wieland, Sen. Lee, Rep. Koppelman and then their superintendent. It was written pretty much so it just went to West Fargo.

Rep. Phillip Mueller: Weren't they asking for getting per pupil payment for those?

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: For the additional students they had.

Rep. Brenda Heller: Is there oil infrastructure money that is sent back to those oil impact counties to deal with the impact of the oil industry?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: I believe there is. My guess is that most of the money goes back to the county for use in infrastructure.

Rep. Brenda Heller: The school hasn't realized any of those dollars?

Rep. Patrick Hatlestad: I wouldn't say they haven't. I am sure they have. I'm guessing that part of the money then goes to some of the needs to keep pace with the enrollments.

Rep. Gary Sukut: Sponsor. Testimony attachment 2.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Do you even have the construction companies to build the buildings onsite that can be building along with the rental units, the new homes, and commercial building? Are there even companies available to build?

Rep. Gary Sukut: We have companies in there from everywhere. There is work and people are showing up to do the work. I don't see that as a problem. I think if we get started on it they will come.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: I understand what you are asking for. This committee needs to decide what kind of precedent we will be setting by doing this. For example Mandan desperately needs a new grade school. Perhaps I would like to add on to this and add something for Mandan and so on. That is what we are talking about.

Rep. Gary Sukut: I understand that and that is why I'm asking you to mull this over.

Rep. John Wall: Do you know the needs of Stanley, Tioga, Killdeer, and other oil types towns are?

Rep. Gary Sukut: I'm guessing their needs are similar. We can talk about the whole western side of the state. We in Williston employ 45% of the people involved in the oil and gas industry and it continues to grow.

Rep. Karen Rohr: You mentioned you've gone through this 3 times already. So has the steady off been gone over? What would happen if the EPA regulations would be mandated in ND?

Rep. Gary Sukut: We can't even guess when it would or will stead off. We are looking at another 70-75 rigs coming in. If the EPA decides they want to come in and shut us down then we are dead in the water but I don't see that happening.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Further questions? Support?

Susan Brokaw – President, Williston Public School District #1: Testimony attachment 3. I would like to answer some questions in addition to my testimony. We did get money that allowed us to purchase 1 school bus. We do have a master facility plan so it does go from A-Z on how we would use this money. It also addresses if there were a downturn in our schools on what we would do with those buildings. Another thing is the steady state growth of oil and how long it will stay. With the growing technology it will probably stay for a long time.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: Do you know how many students are taking courses in your career and tech building?

Susan Brokaw – President, Williston Public School District #1: I need to defer that question.

Rep. Phillip Mueller: Have you talked at all about expanded school days and Saturdays and some of those other ways of getting two sets of students through the facilities that you already have?

Susan Brokaw – President, Williston Public School District #1: One area we came upon was expanded school days but with that we need more teachers and housing. At this point there isn't.

Rep. Phillip Mueller: This bill wouldn't help with new teachers would it?

Susan Brokaw – President, Williston Public School District #1: No it is just for infrastructure.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Do you have the numbers of the new students that started this fall?

Susan Brokaw – President, Williston Public School District #1: The superintendent will give that information.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: Are you hearing some resistance from your constituents that they don't want to put money towards a new high school?

Susan Brokaw – President, Williston Public School District #1: 73% of our constituents come from single or two person households with no children. You need a 60% approval in order to pass a bond issue for funding and we would not get that.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Questions? Support?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: Testimony attachment 4.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: I had asked how many students are currently attending courses at your career and tech building.

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: We have about 10% of our high school students that are participating in career tech and we are also doing partnerships with the state college.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Is that part of the new center from the 2009 session?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: Yes.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: Are any of your Junior High attending or is it just high school?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: Just high school students at this time.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: Did your district hire a lobbyist to lobby on this bill on your district's behalf and if so how much is that lobbyist paid?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: We didn't hire a lobbyist but we did hire a governmental consultant to help us with our bill and that was 8200 dollars for the whole session.

Rep. Karen Rohr: Have you had a lot of parental requests for homeschooling? And if not what is it at now?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: We have about 67-70 students that are home schooled. I haven't seen an increase or decrease.

Rep. Karen Rohr: Do you anticipate one?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: I don't think so.

Rep. Mark Sanford: What about the tax base growth in last 5 years? What is the debt level? Do you have a 10 or 20 mil building fund?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: The tax base growth I'm not sure on. We do have a taxable valuation of 34 thousand dollars and that's what it is per mil. The debt we do have now is for our energy efficient grant. We built our middle school 4-5 years ago and paid it off last month. The building fund is at 10 mil.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: What is your ending fund balance?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: I can find that out for you.

Rep. John Wall: Do the major corporation companies feel any responsibility to get workers to come and ensure a good school system is in place? Have approached them or individuals for naming rights on the building?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: Yes we actually had members from the two larger oil companies a part of our planning. We have support from them. Some of the meetings we've gone to and it's not these two larger companies but some other will say they pay already and will say don't come and ask for more. We have found they are willing to help but they want something in writing. We are doing many different things to find funding. We have a campaign in place now. have been going to our own school population also.

Rep. Brenda Heller: You mentioned your middle school was paid for with your 1% sales tax. Is that city sales tax still in place?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: No. The last legislation it was changed.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: What is your sales tax at currently?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: I'm not sure.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: 7.5 % which will go down to 6.5 once the 1% comes off for the school.

Rep. Mark Sanford: The school district is one of the local entities that has access to the property taxes. What would be the total commitment of property tax for Williston? What is the impact there? Maybe Mr. Coleman could help with that.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Questions? Support?

Darla Ratzak – Principal, Hagan Elementray School, Williston: Testimony attachment 5.

Rep. Mark Sanford: What would the class sizes be in your building?

Darla Ratzak – Principal, Hagan Elementray School, Williston: Right now we are avgergaing 20-25 students a classroom.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Further support?

Jeffrey Zarling: Attachment 6. In your packet is additional testimony from people from the area. Businesses in the area are struggling to keep up with the demand. As businesses in the community when it comes to recruiting employees it is very difficult. Two ways we are interested with relation to the education community is in workforce recruiting. Prospective employees that come to the Williston area are dealing with major impediments, one being dealing with housing. When it comes to moving people to Williston we want to recruit families to come in and stay. We have people going from 10-20 employees for 100-150 employees in a matter of months. As a business owner you can't even realize what you are dealing with. What we are facing is how expensive it is to grow. The problem is there is a lag between being able to accomplish the necessary things and see a profit. We hear it locally in the community. I'd like to address some concepts. From a business perspective you saw about 18 months ago we were hesitant to initiate expansion efforts because it's that history of expansion and contraction that has community leadership hesitant on making commitments.

Rep. John Wall: Do you allow any tax exemptions for new home constructions and if so for how many years?

Jeffrey Zarling: Up until December 21, 2010, we did have implementation of the tax exemption for home family construction. It was the 75,000. One year for the builder and one year for the home owner. It was changed last session. Last year the city commission changed it. So we do not currently have it.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Further support? Opposition? Jerry if you could come forward for a few questions.

Rep. Mark Sanford: My questions dealt with tax base and dept level. The building fund and the utilization of those monies. What the commitment level is there?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: The tax base I don't have, but I think statewide we are seeing pretty good increases out in the oil country for our property evaluation increases. I can get you those if you would like. The debt level I got for the 2009-10 school year and they are reporting a debt of 7.1 million in bonds. Their levy is just under 10 mils. Their general fund levy is 109 mils. I am not sure on the total tax burden but I know it's readily available.

Rep. Mark Sanford: Another piece of helpful information is would the district qualify for a low interest loan?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: They would qualify up to 8 million out of the construction fund.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: That is the interest rate on that?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: I am not sure on that exact rate but I think it is a 2% discount.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Do you have Williston's Indian fund balance?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: It was slightly over 5 million dollars.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: If they saw this increase obviously we know eventually we need a starting point and an end point for when we count students. When will they see a realization of the increase in those students?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: The accounts we have are from the previous year. There will be a one year lag. They will see that benefit next year.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: What would that equal out to?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: I'm not sure but it will be higher than 4,000 dollars a student.

Rep. Lyle Hanson: Could you have someone in DPI come up with total enrollment of grade 1-12 going back 25 years which would include the oil boom in the 1980s? I'm leaving out kindergarten because back then there wasn't any kindergarten.

Jerry Coleman - DPI: I have some information I can provide you with.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: Can you give us some numbers on what the growth was in Dickinson, Minot, Mandan, and Bismarck? What the increases for enrollment were this year?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: The Bismarck increase was 123, West Fargo 236, Mandan 114, Minot 409, Williston 192, and Dickinson 11 but the previous year I think Dickinson had a much greater gain.

Rep. Phillip Mueller: Imputed value of when it's all said and done in Williston, there has to be a change in value in terms of imputed value. How will that effect the equity payment?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: The biggest part of that in Williston's numbers will be the increase they see in oil and gas taxes. That will increase their imputed evaluation for students so that will decrease the amount of state aid that they would receive. While they are an equity district all those changes will kind of offset them.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Questions?

Bob Marthaller - DPI: The school construction would be eligible for a loan from anywhere from 2.5 million up to 8 million dollars. The rate we are seeing right now is somewhere around 6.5 or so. Their loan could be discounted anywhere from half a point to two points so I would say they'd be in the 4% for the loan.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Question? I do have one for Jerry. We put into law two sessions ago the new equity funding formula and we did that we took out all the additional line items. We put them in so we have line by line, factors built in for each of those types of programs that before used to sit outside of the formula. What does something like this do to the formula and is there not a location to find this money? I think that since the appropriations committee wants to look at cutting k-12 education anyway, this potentially would come out of the foundation aid payments or come out of the funding for k-12 education. What would this do to the funding formula and if 14 million came out of the appropriations for k-12 education, what would that do to foundation aid payments?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: It would reduce the repayment rate. How much I am not quite sure.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Are we still doing 1 dollar per million dollars? Or is it not that any longer?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: Off top of my head I don't know.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Have you received reports from the school districts that detail out their use of the stimulus dollars from the last legislative session?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: We have and we publish them on our website.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Do you know what Williston did?

Jerry Coleman - DPI: I do not.

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: We replaced roofs on two of our elementary schools and we also purchased library books.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Do you remember what you received?

Viola LaFontaine – Superintendent, Williston Public School District #1: I believe 1.5 million.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Questions? We will close on HB 1463.

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1463
02/07/11
14173

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



MINUTES:

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: We will open the hearing on HB 1463. This is a bill with a 14 million dollar appropriation for a school in the northwest quadrant of the state.

Vice Chair Lisa Meier: I have some huge concerns with this bill. This would be a new way of actually funding school buildings in North Dakota. When I asked the question how many students had Minot, Dickinson, Mandan, and Bismarck receive, the numbers were pretty significant. With that I move a do not pass.

Rep. John Wall: Second.

Chairman RaeAnn Kelsch: Committee discussion? We will take the roll on a do not pass on HB 1463. We will close on HB 1463.

15 YEAS 0 NAYS 0 ABSENT
CARRIER: Rep. Phillip Mueller

DO NOT PASS

Date: 02-07-11
Roll Call Vote #: _____

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1463

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number: _____

Action Taken: Do Pass Do Not Pass Amended Adopt
Amendment

Rerefer to Appropriations Reconsider

Motion Made By VICE CHAIR MEIER Seconded By REP. WALL

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Kelsch	X		Rep. Hanson	X	
Vice Chairman Meier	X		Rep. Hunsakor	X	
Rep. Heilman	X		Rep. Mock	X	
Rep. Heller	X		Rep. Mueller	X	
Rep. Johnson	X				
Rep. Karls	X				
Rep. Rohr	X				
Rep. Rust	X				
Rep. Sanford	X				
Rep. Schatz	X				
Rep. Wall	X				

Total (Yes) 15 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment REP. MUELLER

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1463: Education Committee (Rep. R. Kelsch, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS (15 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1463 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2011 TESTIMONY

HB 1463

TESTIMONY ATTACHMENT 1

Madam Chair and members of the Education Committee

I stand before you to introduce HB 1463. For the record I am Representative Patrick Hatlestad, District One, Williston.

HB 1463 appropriates \$14 million to the Department of Public Instruction for the purpose of a grant to school districts that meet the qualifications listed in the bill: NW section of the state, enrolls at least 2200 students, has experienced unprecedented and unforeseen growth in its student population from 30 to 50% in the elementary grades over the last 5 years, has completed a formal study and approved a master plan ID ing its capital construction needs , and will struggle to continue to provide a quality education to its students.

I would like to start with a refrain seldom heard in the committee rooms of the legislature: "PLEASE, WE NEED HELP".

Early in 2000, a facility survey indicated a continuing decline in students to less than 2000. The proposed plan, supported by the community, suggested adding a new 7-8th grade wing to the high school, renovations within the high school, and the construction of a gym at the L&C elementary school. Temporary classrooms, built 20-30 years ago, would be phased out as the enrollment decline continued. What has happened is just the opposite. Elementary growth has been

significant and future projected numbers take your breath away.

In 2011, a new master plan, the result of an extensive study, involving a cross section of the community, projects \$70 million of facility construction and improvements. This number reflects the attempt to catch up and then try to stay ahead of current and projected enrollments. In 2010, alone, we saw an increase of 187 students, stretching classroom capacity to the max. We will construct at least 3 temporary classrooms structures to try to relieve the overcrowding for the next school year. However, that does nothing to deal with new enrollments. Our budgets are being stretched thin.

In 2011 it is estimated there will 2000 wells drilled, $\frac{1}{2}$ within 70 miles of Williston. It means we will continue to struggle with enrollments, funding and the ability of the community to support our district needs.

Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the Committee. I will stand for questions. Experts to follow.

TESTIMONY ATTACHMENT 2

HOUSE BILL 1463

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

PIONEER ROOM

TESTIMONY FROM REPRESENTATIVE GARY R. SUKUT, DISTRICT 1

MADAME CHAIR & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 1) COMMITTEE HAS SEEN A BILL OF THIS NATURE BEFORE

- 2) UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES – THIS IS NOT AN ISSUE THAT TOOK YEARS TO SURFACE – IT BASICALLY HAPPENED OVERNIGHT – BY THIS SPRING WE WILL HAVE 1000 NEW RENTAL UNITS ON LINE WITH NUMEROUS NEW UNITS ON THE WAY. BY 2012 WE WILL HAVE AT LEAST 300-400 NEW HOMES. DEVELOPERS ARE PURCHASING PROPERTY TO THE NORTH & WEST OF THE CITY FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL USE.

- 3) ALL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS FACING OVERWHELMING PROBLEMS, SCHOOL DISTRICT NOT EXEMPTED

- 4) HAVE A RIGHT TO SOME OF THE OIL/GAS REVENUES

- 5) URGE COMMITTEES SERIOUS CONSIDERATION FOR SOME FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

THERE ARE OTHERS HERE TO TESTIFY TO IDENTIFY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT PROBLEMS, NEEDS & PLANS

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME

TESTIMONY ATTACHMENT 3

Williston Public School District #1

Dr. Viola LaFontaine, Superintendent
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Williston, ND 58802-1407
Phone (701) 572-1580
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Susan Brokaw, Board President
Malcolm Pippin, Director

Kim Egge, Director
Duane DeMars, Director
Debbie Olson, Director

HB 1463 – Education Committee Testimony

Susan Brokaw

President, Williston Public School District #1.

Chairman Kelsch, members of the education committee, my name is Susan Brokaw, I am from Williston, ND and President of the Williston Public School District # 1 School Board.

I support HB 1463, which would provide an opportunity for a school district to apply for a grant to meet the urgent, critical needs of their school district. The critical needs of a school district at this time are the construction and renovation of school buildings, particularly in the Northwest quadrant of our state. The districts need state assistance in order to have sufficient classroom space available for our rapidly growing student population.

The Northwest part of our state has experienced unprecedented and unforeseen growth in its student population as a result of its proximity to the state's oil-producing region. Our school district is expecting an increase in enrollment by at least thirty percent in grades kindergarten through grade six, which will be demonstrated in numbers by the speakers that follow. With more housing developments being created and occupied by next school year, the percent of new students may be higher.

Many area schools are bursting at the seams, leaving school officials to contemplate how to handle the enrollment situation. We at the Williston school district along with other districts have tried to manage the increased enrollment by taking steps as the needs arise, with adding classrooms, restructuring grade configurations or splitting grades into more manageable sizes. However, there still remains a lack of space and the physical options of providing a quality educational environment to more students is becoming rare. Therefore, there is a need to look for additional funding that fills in the financial gap to build the infrastructure needed to support the education of a districts' increasing student population. The state funds requested would be leveraged with local funds, hence forming a state-local partnership in addressing this rapid student growth.

The oil patch shows no sign of slowing down. After years of drilling, the production side of the oil industry will still remain and families will stay in the area with their children. The need for new school infrastructure is not going away. Schools need to be maintained and expanded in order to take care of the needs of its students. House bill 1463 provides the ability for immediate funding that would help meet the critical need for the construction and renovation of school district buildings.

Please support HB 1463 with a "Do Pass" recommendation.

"Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions."

TESTIMONY ATTACHMENT 4

Williston Public School District #1

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Malcolm Pippin, Director

Kim Egge, Director
Duane DeMars, Director
Debbie Olson, Director

Bill No.: HB1463

Hearing Committee: House Education Committee

Date: Monday, January 31, 2011

Honorable Chairman Kelsch and Committee Members

My name is Viola LaFontaine. I am the Superintendent for Williston Public School District # 1.

Williston School District #1 is here today to support HB 1463 which would appropriate funds to the

Superintendent of Public Instruction for the purpose of providing a school district's critical needs for

construction and renovation grants. Schools such as Williston are experiencing unprecedented and unforeseen growth in its student population as a result of its proximity to the state's oil-producing region.

This past fall of 2010, Williston School District # 1 experienced an increase in student enrollment by 187 students. This increase enrollment did not hit its peak until 2 weeks before school started. We attempted to secure classroom's off campus to meet our needs, but the private facilities we thought we could use did not meet the state fire codes for classroom instruction. At Lewis and Clark Elementary school, we moved our Title 1 classroom to a smaller room and used that classroom for a 1st grade classroom which could only support 15 students because of the size of the classroom. The room the Title Teacher moved to was a staff bathroom that was renovated to a small room. We moved our library into the hall and used the library for a kindergarten classroom.

The previous year in 2009-2010 we added a kindergarten classroom to one of our other elementary schools however this year, 2010-11, that classroom needed to become a first grade classroom. This school is very crowded.

The enrollment at Williston Public School is as follows: **End of School year**

	2006-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	Jan 11
K-6	1010	1005	1076	1144	1247

Five year growth of 237 students of which 187 came in August of 2010

7-12	1108	1071	1096	1107	1146
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Our middle school and high school have not grown as quickly as the elementary, but as our city continues to grow so will the middle school and high school enrollment continues to grow, as well the continued growth in the elementary school and students who will move into the middle and high school.

In working with the City of Williston as well as communicating on a weekly basis with developers, we are told that the city of Williston will have at a minimum two apartment complexes with 425 apartments completed and 400 single family homes ready for families to move into by the end of July. In talking with the oil company management they are buying or renting many of the apartments and homes for their workers to move into when they are completed. The oil companies want their workers to bring their families to Williston in order to keep their workers with their companies. They know from experience that the man camps are good for single workers, but the married workers want their families with them. With 800 family living spaces becoming available, we know we will experience a growth in student enrollment.

Included with our testimony is a letter from Mayor Ward Koeser, he was unable to be here today, but wanted to share his support for the bill and the fact that the school and the city are working together to address our needs.

Without a critical needs construction and renovation grant, our ability to continue providing a quality education and related services to our students could be effected. Williston Public School District # 1 students have scored very well on North Dakota State Assessment. We want to continue to provide a quality education to our children and for our students to say they were educated in North Dakota and have the highest level of skills and knowledge to lead North Dakota or anywhere in the nation. It is very challenging to do so if we fill our classrooms with 30 to 35 students per classroom.

We have developed a master facility plan to help us assess our school buildings so we could plan for the future. We discovered we have schools that cannot take on any more core support services such as bathrooms, lunchrooms and special service spaces. We discussed buying portable classrooms, but we don't have enough toilets to meet the needs of more students. We currently are using 11 portable classrooms. We would have to add bathrooms to the core structure. We have one elementary school that cannot facilitate any more bathrooms, the sewer and water system is running at a maximum with the current enrollment. We service lunch in our multipurpose rooms which service as our lunch room and gym. When we add more students to these schools

We would need to start serving lunch earlier and go later. Right now we start lunch at 11:15 a.m. in most schools and serve until 1:00 p.m. We know that 17% of the new students who are enrolling in our district have special education needs and we need more space to offer services to our current students as well as our new students.

I stand before you asking for your support for this bill that would help schools prepare for such rapid growth. We know the industry and economic development in our city will flourish and we will receive funding these entities. The state fund request would be leveraged by local funds and forming a partnership in addressing our rapid growth.

We come before because of our critical needs not because of our wants for new or renovated facilities, but I ask for your help in our time of need. My greatest hope for our school at this time is that I don't have to move more libraries into our halls, or take down our computer labs, or divide a gym into classrooms. I don't want to sacrifice the education of our children because of a situation that could not have been predicted. We are a strong community and we will work through these challenging times. We will make tough decision as we move forward in a progressive and prosperous time. We hope you will understand our situation and support

B 1463.

Thank you,



Dr. Viola LaFontaine

Williston Public School District # 1 Superintendent



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Bill No.: HB 1463
Hearing Committee: House Education Committee

Date: Monday, January 31, 2011

Honorable Chairman Kelsch and Committee Members,

The City of Williston is in support of HB 1463. As a part of the Bakken oil play Williston is experiencing very rapid growth. Since this growth is occurring so rapidly, we need state assistance in order to have sufficient classroom space available for our rapidly growing population.

While we have been fortunate the past few years to have some vacant lots and subdivisions, we have no vacant lots available for additional growth, so we are in the process of building new subdivisions and expanding our community beyond our traditional borders. We fully expect that our community will double in size in but a few short years.

This has also been the case with our schools. We no longer have space to house the student populations we already have, and we anticipate considerable growth even within the upcoming biennium. Were this growth to occur gradually over a longer period of time, we could conceivably finance this growth on our own.

The state funds requested would be leveraged by local funds, hence forming a state-local partnership in addressing this rapid growth.

Please support HB 1463 with a "Do Pass" recommendation.

Kind Regards,

E. Ward Koeser
Chairman, Williston City Commission

TESTIMONY ATTACHMENT 5

Williston Public School District #1

Dr. Viola LaFontaine, Superintendent
Post Office Box 1407
Williston, ND 58802-1407
Phone (701) 572-1580
Fax (701) 572-3547

Susan Brokaw, Board President
Malcolm Pippin, Director

Kim Egge, Director
Duane DeMars, Director
Debbie Olson, Director

Good Afternoon.

Thank you Chairman Kelsch and members of the education committee for allowing us to speak today. My name is Darla Ratzak. I am the principal of Hagan Elementary School in Williston.

I am here today in support of House Bill Number 1463.

Hagan Elementary School is one of the largest sites within the Williston Public School District. The school sits adjacent to the one of the largest planned housing developments in Williston.

In October in the area around Hagan School planned or under construction there were 121 single family houses, 266 multi family houses, and 206 mobile homes. The future plan is for 400 single and multi family houses and 400 plus apartment units to be built near Hagan School. (Photo)

With all of the development around the school, families move into town looking for the neighborhood school in which their children will attend. Because of the growth, these families are not guaranteed to attend the school down the street closest to their home. School district staff work hard to ensure that the classroom numbers remain fairly even across the four elementary schools in the district.

Williston Public School District #1 takes pride in the strong academic performance of the students. Because of the unexpected increase in the number of students, the staff are not able to spend as much individual or small group time with the students.

We are also seeing an increased number of students coming into the district with special needs. Because of space constraints, the special education programs are not keeping pace with the student needs.

Hagan Elementary has undergone changes over the past three years to accommodate the students coming in.

We have converted a locker room into a kindergarten classroom. Our tutors are using bookrooms and storage rooms to work with the students they serve.

Our school library shares the space with the computer lab. The two are separated by dividers, so that we can hold library and technology classes at the same time.

Our gym doubles as our lunchroom. With additional students, we will have a difficult time scheduling enough time for P.E. to meet the state required minutes.

Hagan is not the only school in the district experiencing growing pains. We do know that the growth we are seeing in the area around our school, we will have more and more families coming into the school wanting their child to attend that neighborhood school. We will continue to tell them that they are not guaranteed a place within our school.

We are here today asking for your support of this bill that will allow for these families living within a few blocks of the school to have that neighborhood school that they are looking for.

The district has a plan in place that would allow for a large number of students to attend Hagan school. This would allow for the other schools in the district to get their classrooms and library back and eliminate a lot of the over-crowding in those buildings.

Thank you all so much for having us here today.



January 31, 2011

North Dakota Legislative Assembly
Education Committee
600 East Boulevard
Bismarek, ND 58505-0360

Re: House Bill 1463

I would like to express our support for House Bill 1463 to assist with funding for impacted schools in the northwest quadrant of North Dakota. The availability and quality of education is of significant importance to business in our community and our business specifically.

Recruiting qualified employees to fill open positions is one of the top priorities facing area businesses. Educational opportunities including quality of curriculum and facilities is an important issue to families when considering employment in the area.

Educating and training a qualified workforce is another important priority for local businesses. As our businesses continue to grow and as the workforce changes through retirement and attrition, we need to ensure that our children are properly educated to fill the workforce needs of the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Chris Jundt', is written over a horizontal line.

Chris Jundt
AVP

January 31, 2011

North Dakota Legislative Assembly
Education Committee
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Re: House Bill 1463

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Educating and training a qualified workforce is another important priority for local businesses. As our businesses continue to grow and as the workforce changes through retirement and attrition, we need to ensure that our children and properly educated to fill the workforce needs of the future.

Sincerely,

Joan Benson
HR Department
Red River Supply, Inc
PO Box 1146
Williston ND 58802-1146



220 2nd Ave. East
P.O. Box 1406
Williston, ND 58801

January 31, 2011

North Dakota Legislative Assembly
Education Committee
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Re: House Bill 1463

I would like to express our support for House Bill 1463 to assist with funding for impacted schools in the northwest quadrant of North Dakota. The availability and quality of education is of significant importance to business in our community and our business specifically.

Recruiting qualified employees to fill open positions is one of the top priorities facing area businesses. Educational opportunities including quality of curriculum and facilities is an important issue to families when considering employment in the area.

Educating and training a qualified workforce is another important priority for local businesses. As our businesses continue to grow and as the workforce changes through retirement and attrition, we need to ensure that our children and properly educated to fill the workforce needs of the future.

Sincerely,

Ken Callahan
Energy Service Manager
220 2nd Ave East
Williston, ND 58801

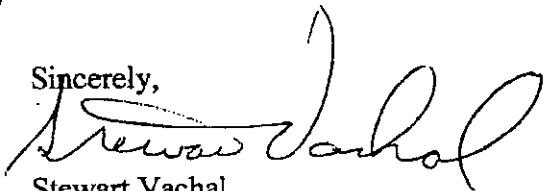
January 31, 2011

North Dakota Legislative Assembly
Education Committee
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Re: House Bill 1463

I would like to express my support for House Bill 1463. As a co-owner in four businesses in Williston, it is vital that we educate and train a qualified workforce that upon graduation from college, would return to this area so their children could receive the very education they were able to receive. Educational opportunities including quality of curriculum and facilities is an important issue to families when considering employment in any area.

Sincerely,



Stewart Vachal
General Manager
Industrial Equipment Sales & Service, Inc.
Badlands Steel, Inc
Grizzly Wire Rope & Chain, Inc
ECO Alternative Fuel Systems, Inc



GeoResources, Inc.
Oil & Gas Exploration and Production

January 31, 2011

North Dakota Legislative Assembly
Education Committee
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Re: House Bill 1463

I would like to express GeoResources, Inc.'s support for House Bill 1463 to assist with funding for impacted schools in the northwest quadrant of North Dakota. The availability and quality of education is of significant importance to business in our community and our business specifically.

Recruiting qualified employees to fill open positions is one of the top priorities facing area businesses. Educational opportunities including quality of curriculum and facilities is an important issue to families when considering employment in the area.

Educating and training a qualified workforce is another important priority for local businesses. As our businesses continue to grow and as the workforce changes through retirement and attrition, we need to ensure that our children and properly educated to fill the workforce needs of the future.

Sincerely,

GeoResources, Inc.

Cathy Kruse
Corporate Secretary

January 31, 2011

North Dakota Legislative Assembly
Education Committee
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Re: House Bill 1463

This letter is in support of House Bill 1463. I represent 465 businesses in the Williston area.

The Northwest quadrant of North Dakota is one of the few economic bright spots for the entire United States. The robust energy success here is due in large part to innovative drilling techniques made by well educated engineers and scientists. Our American prosperity has been fueled by such advances and innovation.

It's crucial that regional educational opportunities include a challenging curriculum along with appropriate facilities to ensure continued economic prosperity for North Dakota. A prime driver in people seeking to relocate to North Dakota or former residents to "return home" is the kind of education they feel their children will receive.

Our local businesses are constantly seeking well educated entry level workers in all sectors. Their continued growth locally is predicated upon workers who have been prepared to compete in our global economy.

Your support of HB1463 will have a long-term positive benefit for schools in northwestern North Dakota who have been impacted by our explosive growth.

Sincerely,

Kevin Paschke
Executive Director

Building Permits / Housing Units

Williston Public School Dist. 1 Enrollments

Year	1-Mile			School Year	K	Gr 1-6	Gr 7-12	Total	Chng in Enroll
	City Limits	Jurisdiction	Total						
2003	24	3	27						
2004	26	6	32						
2005	45	10	55						
2006	81	13	94						
2007	180	7	187	06-07	134	876	1108	2118	
2008	137	40	177	07-08	154	851	1071	2076	-42
2009	158	8	166	08-09	158	918	1096	2172	96
2010	610	78	688	09-10	194	950	1107	2251	79
211			400+ (*)	Jan 2011	179	1068	1146	2393	142

* Estimates from announcements or planning and zoning meeting minutes