

**2015 HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

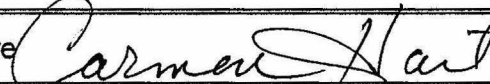
**HB 1412**

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union, State Capitol

HB 1412  
2/12/2015  
23785

☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature 

### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to legislative redistricting requirements

### Minutes:

Attachments 1-3

**Chairman Kasper** opened the hearing on HB 1412.

**Rep. Ben Hanson** appeared in support. Attachments 1-3 (01:36- 07:53)

**Rep. Amerman** The senators and the two representatives in the A and B would still run the same year?

**Rep. Hanson** Correct.

**Rep. Louser** This clearly eliminates the concept of running as a team although you are with your senator but not with your house member. What are we hearing from voters that would necessitate a change after they have been used to having two representatives and one senator in their district?

**Rep. Hanson** In general it would be moving away from the team structure. I do like the idea in an election of the philosophy that it is the candidate who is running and not that person's teammates. The only kind of person who would think of this is someone like me. I present it because I think you can always improve. I think this makes the process of representation more precise.

**Rep. Karls** You picked District 39 and there are two geographical areas that would be somewhat similar population wise. Look at District 28. It is three complete counties and parts of three others. You have very little population. In a city district do you cut the rich half of your district off from the poorer half of your district, or do you split them down the middle?

**Rep. Hanson** We would do the exact same process as we do now for redistricting. You are going to run into the exact same problems no matter how you slice it. I would have no intent on breaking up folks by their income levels, and we don't do that currently.

**Rep. Karls** It is a possibility that would happen.

**Rep. Hanson** It is only a possibility that would happen if the redistricting committee intended on doing that.

**Rep. Karls** If you maintain that redistricting is sloppy, I think this would just make it twice as sloppy.

**Rep. Mooney** Is it similar then to the way that it is for local elections right now?

**Rep. Hanson** The county commission would not be an analogy. You as the voter in District 20 would have a ballot that would simply say who do you want to vote for the House of Representatives between this D and this R for House 20A, and who do you want to vote for senator between this D and R?

**Rep. Mooney** The people in the southern portion of this District 39 map would vote only for that representative, and the people in this northern quadrant would vote only for that representative?

**Rep. Hanson** Correct, and they would both have the same vote for the senator for the whole district.

**Rep. Keith Kempenich**, District 39, appeared in support. We looked at this concept back in 1997. Large districts do present themselves as challenges. It doesn't hurt to look at it.

**Rep. Louser** Because of the size of your district, is your interest in this that it would make you closer to the voters?

**Rep. Kempenich** The last time we debated this we were running every two years. Going four years did change the dynamics. The party part gets stretched.

**Rep. Steiner** Don't the voters take care of that in your district? It looks like they field candidates from Watford City when there was an opening. They are paying attention to geographic as well aren't they?

**Rep. Kempenich** Yes.

**Rep. Louser** What if your incumbent and your spouse wants to run as well?

**Rep. Kempenich** That could create some interesting conversation.

No opposition or neutral.

The hearing was closed.

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

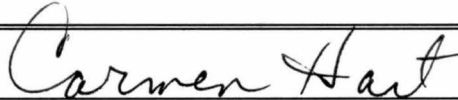
Fort Union, State Capitol

HB 1412  
2/13/2015  
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☐ Subcommittee

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to legislative redistricting requirements

### Minutes:

"Click to enter attachment information."

**Chairman Kasper** opened the meeting on HB 1412. He reviewed what the bill does.

**Rep. Louser** This would make a little better sense if the house was running every two years. It seems like we have achieved some balance by running every four years. Many of us have found success running as a team. Think what this would do for a senate candidate. You would have two campaigns. I make a motion for a DO NOT PASS.

**Rep. B. Koppelman** seconded the motion.

**Rep. Laning** I come from a larger district. I think it is helpful in the campaign to partner up. It works fairly well in our district. I like the four year hitches instead of two.

**Chairman Kasper** I served on the redistricting committee, and the software we use is fantastic. We are charged in redistricting is to make the districts as close to equal size in population as possible. District 39 is so few people, so you have to expand the area to get the 14,300 people.

**Rep. Steiner** I think that will change in the West, because we are getting more people moving out there.

A roll call vote was taken. 13 Yeas, 1 Nay, 0 Absent.

**Rep. Laning** will carry the bill.

Date: 2-13-15  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1412

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☐ Do Pass ☒ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Louser Seconded By B. Koppelman

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Jim Kasper	X		Rep. Bill Amerman		+
Vice Chair Karen Rohr	X		Rep. Gail Mooney	+	
Rep. Jason Dockter	X		Rep. Mary Schneider	+	
Rep. Mary C. Johnson	X		Rep. Kris Wallman	+	
Rep. Karen Karls	X				
Rep. Ben Koppelman	X				
Rep. Vernon Laning	X				
Rep. Scott Louser	X				
Rep. Jay Seibel	X				
Rep. Vicky Steiner	X				

Total (Yes) 13 No 1

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Laning

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

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1412: Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Rep. Kasper, Chairman)**  
recommends **DO NOT PASS** (13 YEAS, 1 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).  
HB 1412 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

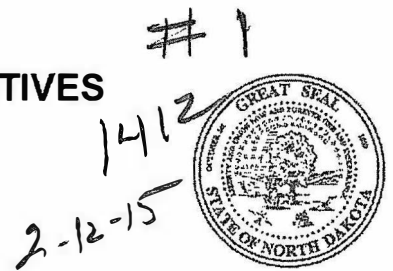
**2015 TESTIMONY**

**HB 1412**



## NORTH DAKOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL  
600 EAST BOULEVARD  
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360



### **Representative Ben Hanson**

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### **COMMITTEES:**

Industry, Business and Labor  
Transportation

### **HB 1412 Testimony; Rep. Ben Hanson**

#### **House Committee on GVA:**

*February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 testimony in regards to HB 1412; A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 54 -03 -01.5 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to legislative redistricting requirements.*

Mr. Chair, fellow committee members, for the record my name is Ben Hanson and I am a representative from District 16 in Fargo and West Fargo. I stand before you today to testify in favor HB 1412.

Committee members, as you are well aware, North Dakota currently has its House of Representatives elections set as four-person free-for-alls. Two Republicans, Two Democrats and, in 2016 we may see two Libertarian candidates now that they are classified primary party, run against each other for two open slots. This often leads to confusion on the part of voters, voting for only one candidate or thinking they could only vote for candidates of one party.

House Bill 1412 is based on the principle that ever candidate running to represent the people of North Dakota should run on their own merits and as one-on-one candidates. Forty-one of the fifty other states in the United States use the individual district model for House seats in their state legislatures.

*From NCSL: "Arizona, New Jersey, South Dakota and Washington have two-member districts selected from the same boundaries as the senate districts like in North Dakota. Maryland, New Hampshire, Vermont and West Virginia have a limited number of multi-member districts in addition to single-member districts."*



If passed HB 1412 would not go into effect until the next redrawing of legislative districts post the 2020 census, aka in election year 2022. House districts would be divided exactly in half of Senate districts. I can't predict what the population of our fair state will be then but based on the current district make up of 14,300 people per Legislative District, if 1412 were to be in effect now we would have 14,300 person Senate Districts and 7,150 person House Districts.

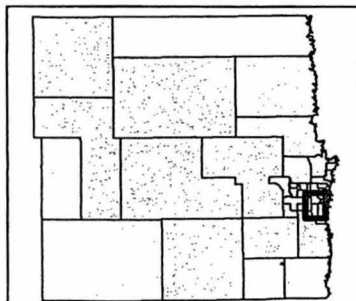
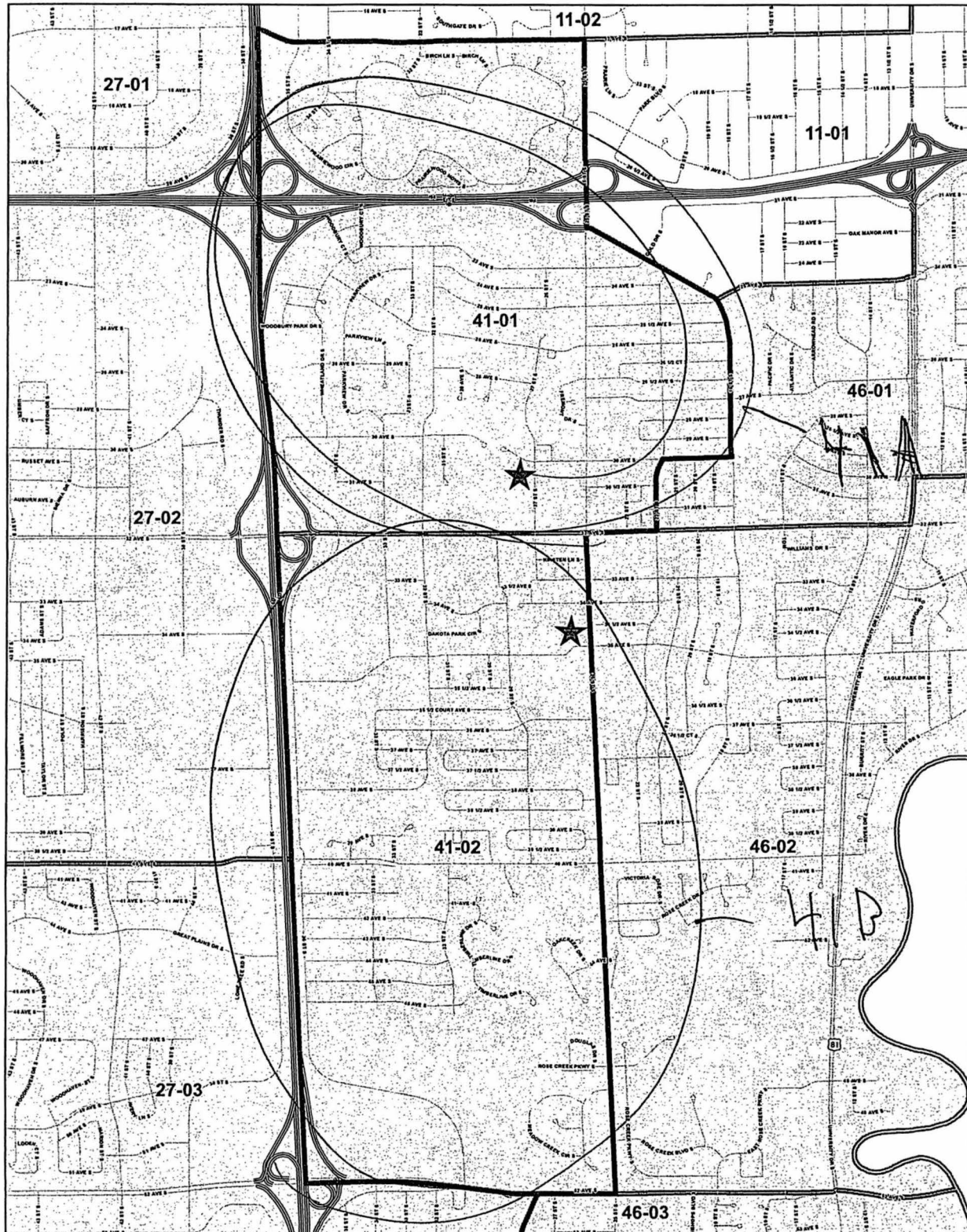
I feel this would have many advantages. It would reduce voter confusion. Candidates who weren't as able to get around would have an easier time talking to all their constituents before elections. It wouldn't increase the size of the government (via members of the House) and yet would make individual House members that much more responsive to their individual district with half the constituents to answer directly to. As of 1996 I believe, when the electorate decided to move House members into 4 year terms, true distinctions between the bodies have been lacking. Splitting the districts into two for individual House members would help distinguish and give definition to our two legislative bodies.

Looking at the bill itself, what I found so interesting upon looking up relevant Century Code to draft this bill was that I am not adding new language to Century Code. In fact, this option has always been here and HB 1412 would simply remove the at-large option.

# Legislative District 41

Cass County, ND

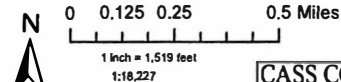
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2-12-15



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— Roads															
— Interstate															
— River															
— Railroad															
□ Precinct															
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## District 41

Precincts: 41-01 41-02



Cass County GIS  
Map Created 3/15/2014  
DISCLAIMER: This map is made available as a public service. Maps and data are to be used for reference purposes only and Cass County, ND, is not responsible for any inaccuracies or omissions contained. No responsibility is assumed for damages or other liabilities due to the accuracy, availability, use, or misuse of the information herein provided.



