

2021 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2169

2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Roughrider Room, State Capitol

SB 2169
1/21/2021
Senate Appropriations Committee

Relating to a COVID-19 relief grant program for essential workers.
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Senator Holmberg opened the hearing at 2:14 pm.

Senators Holmberg, Krebsbach, Wanzek, Bekkedahl, Poolman, Erbele, Dever, Oehlke, Rust, Davison, Hogue, Sorvaag, Mathern, and Heckaman were present.

Discussion Topics:

- Needs based assistance
- Federal Allocations

Senator Kathy Hogan, District 21, Bill Sponsor - introduced the bill, testifying in favor #2136 and presenting amendment 21.0397.01001 – testimony #2155.

Landis Larson, President, ND AFL-CIO testified in favor and submitted testimony #2053.

Senator Tim Mathern, District 11, Bill Sponsor - testified in favor.

Additional written testimony: #2124.

Senator Holmberg closed the hearing at 2:44 pm.

Rose Laning, Committee Clerk

TESTIMONY
Senate Appropriations Committee
SB 2169
January 21, 2021
Senator Kathy Hogan

Chairman Holmberg and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, my name is Kathy Hogan, and I represent District 21 the heart of Fargo.

SB 2169 is a bill in response to the 2020 CARES ACT funding. As I monitored the spending process over the last year, I became concerned about the lack of legislative involvement and transparency in developing the spending of over 1 billion dollars. I recognize that the Emergency Commission and Budget section gave approval to the recommendations from the Executive branch, but these were reactive actions rather than pro-active initiatives. The Legislative branch of government is responsible to approval of budget and what happened last year hopefully never happens again.

This bill does three things. First it recognizes our many citizens who provided essential services during the COVID crisis from in-home care workers, grocery store clerks, public employees and delivery drivers. The North Dakota work ethic and sense of community were so evident. Secondly, it provides a broad and direct economic stimulus because it is focus directly on working individuals who, if they receive a stimulus payment, are most likely to directly spend or use that money. Finally, it establishes that we as the legislature need to be involved in these critical budget decisions.

This bill is contingent on additional flexible federal funding for COVID relief. I have prepared amendments to lower the stimulus payment and eliminate section 3 which will eliminate any need for ND general funds in the 2021-2023 budget.

One of the most successful COVID response funding initiatives was the MEAP program which was implement in late November and early December. That program was well utilized to assist health care workers with COVID related expenses. The Legislative Body needs to take back its budgeting authority and this is one way we can do it.

Thank you, Chairman Holmberg I would be more than willing to answer any questions.

21.0397.01001
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for
Senator Hogan

January 21, 2021

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2169

Page 1, line 3, remove "to provide a contingent appropriation;"

Page 1, line 10, replace "one thousand" with "five hundred"

Page 3, remove lines 8 through 15

Renumber accordingly

**North Dakota AFL-CIO**

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**Testimony of Landis Larson, ND AFL-CIO President
In Support of SB 2169
January 21, 2021**

Chairman Holmberg and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

My name is Landis Larson, President of the North Dakota AFL-CIO. The North Dakota AFL-CIO is the federation of labor unions in North Dakota, representing the interests of all working people in our state.

I am testifying on behalf of the North Dakota AFL-CIO in support of Senate Bill 2169.

For nearly a year now, we have all relied on the dedication and sacrifice of the brave North Dakotans on the front lines of our economy to meet our basic needs. We have deemed them essential and said many appreciative things about these workers and the goods and services they have provided throughout the pandemic. For many essential workers, particularly those making just enough to get by before the pandemic, being an essential worker has come with a mountain of extra responsibilities, duties and pitfalls, adding to the already challenging time we are all experiencing. An extra one-thousand dollars in their bank account to offset their sacrifice is the least we can do as a state to show our gratitude for these workers.

Many essential workers have had more responsibilities at work for the same pay, and in some cases even less pay than before the pandemic. Many essential workers have seen their hours cut and their schedules become unpredictable. Many essential workers have struggled to find adequate childcare to meet the demands of these increasingly unpredictable school and work schedules. Some essential workers have been asked to work in conditions that they knew were unsafe, but feared retaliation or losing their jobs for speaking up.

Essential workers in the service industry have seen their take home pay plummet with the loss of tips. Essential workers in our utility industry have been working long, unpredictable hours since day one to ensure that the lights, heat and water stay on as vital pieces to an effective public health response to our crisis. Essential workers in our nursing homes and child care centers have done incredible work under intense pressure to keep our children and our elders as safe and loved as possible. Production workers, like the workers at the plant I come out of, have continued to work long hours in plants and factories and our brothers and sisters in the

building trades have continued to do the important work of building and maintaining our infrastructure. These are all things that have kept us going as people, but have also allowed our economy to dodge some of the worst of the pandemic's economic fallout.

An extra thousand dollars in our pockets would be used to buy food, pay some rent or a mortgage, take on home improvements, or spend in the local economy helping out our struggling small businesses, but most importantly it would put our money where our mouth is when it comes showing our gratitude for the hard work so many North Dakota workers that have put themselves on the line for the good of all of us.

I recommend a "Do Pass" on Senate Bill 2169.

Respectfully Submitted,
Landis Larson
North Dakota AFL-CIO President



Great Public Schools

Great Public Service

2124

**Testimony SB 2169
Senate Appropriations Committee
January 21, 2021**

Chairman Holmberg and members of the Committee, for the record, my name is Nick Archuleta, and I am president of North Dakota United. On behalf of our 11,500 public employee members, I urge a DO PASS recommendation for SB 2169.

Mr. Chairman, public employees, regardless of the jobs they do, have been impacted greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic. K-12 teachers and higher education faculty have had to develop distance teaching and learning protocols so their students' education could continue. Education support professionals, too, had to shift focus to make sure our schools are sanitized, and students continued to receive nutritious meals, whether they were learning from home or in school. State employees had to develop practices that allowed them to work from the safety of their homes without interrupting the outstanding service the North Dakotans expect and deserve.

Chairman Holmberg and members of the Committee, this pandemic has not been easy for anyone and I understand that the cost of this proposal is quite high. That said, North Dakota's exceptional public employees and first responders have gone the extra mile in service to the people of North Dakota. Providing them with some token of appreciation would go a very long way in showing the state's appreciation for a job well done.

In closing, I urge a DO PASS recommendation for SB.2169.

2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Roughrider Room, State Capitol

SB 2169
2/17/2021
Senate Appropriations Committee

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to a COVID-19 relief grant program for essential workers.

Senator Holmberg opened the committee work at 9:07 a.m.

Senators present: **Holmberg, Krebsbach, Wanzek, Bekkedahl, Poolman, Erbele, Dever, Oehlke, Rust, Davison, Hogue, Sorvaag, Mathern, and Heckaman.**

Senator Wanzek moved DO NOT PASS on SB 2169.
Senator Poolman second.

<i>Senators</i>		<i>Senators</i>	
<i>Senator Holmberg</i>	Y	<i>Senator Hogue</i>	Y
<i>Senator Krebsbach</i>	Y	<i>Senator Oehlke</i>	Y
<i>Senator Wanzek</i>	Y	<i>Senator Poolman</i>	Y
<i>Senator Bekkedahl</i>	Y	<i>Senator Rust</i>	Y
<i>Senator Davison</i>	Y	<i>Senator Sorvaag</i>	Y
<i>Senator Dever</i>	Y	<i>Senator Heckaman</i>	N
<i>Senator Erbele</i>	Y	<i>Senator Mathern</i>	N

Roll Call Vote 12-2-0. Motion carried.

Senator Holmberg will carry the bill.

Senator Holmberg closed the committee work at 10:18 a.m.

Rose Laning, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2169: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Holmberg, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (12 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2169 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.