2023 HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS

HB 1514

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Political Subdivisions Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1514
2/9/2023

Relating to the threshold for passing a bond within a municipality.

11:00 A.M. Chairman Longmuir opened the hearing. Members present: Chairman Longmuir, Vice Chairman Fegley, Rep. Hatlestad, Rep. Heilman, Rep. Holle, Rep. Jonas, Rep. Motschenbacher, Rep. Ostlie, Rep. Rios, Rep. Toman, Rep. Warrey, Rep. Davis, and Rep. Hager. Absent: Rep. Klemin

Discussion Topics:

- Qualified electors threshold
- Statistics
- Election turnouts
- Pollbook data

Rep. Toman: Introduced the bill.

Dr. Mike Bitz, Superintendent, Mandan Public Schools: Testimony #20169

Dr. Ammie Kovas, on behalf of Levi Bachmeyer, Business Mgmt., West Fargo Schools: No written testimony.

Amy Dekoll, NDSBA: No written testimony.

Donnell Preskey, NDACo: Testimony #20193

Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson: ND League of Cities: No written testimony.

Hearing closed at 11:22 PM.

Delores Shimek, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Political Subdivisions Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1514
2/9/2023

Relating to the threshold for passing a bond within a municipality.

2:49 PM. Chairman Longmuir opened the meeting. Members present: Chairman Longmuir, Vice Chairman Fegley, Rep. Hatlestad, Rep. Heilman, Rep. Holle, Rep. Jonas, Rep. Motschenbacher, Rep. Ostlie, Rep. Rios, Rep. Toman, Rep. Warrey, Rep. Davis, and Rep. Hager. Absent: Rep. Klemin

Discussion Topics:

- Committee work

Rep. Bahl moved a Do Not Pass;
Seconded by Rep. Hatlestad

Representatives	Vote
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Clayton Fegley	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick Hatlestad	Y
Representative Matt Heilman	Y
Representative Dawson Holle	Y
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	A
Representative Mike Motschenbacher	N
Representative Mitch Ostlie	A
Representative Nico Rios	N
Representative Nathan Toman	N
Representative Jonathan Warrey	Y

Roll call vote: 9 Yes 3 No 2 Absent Carrier Rep. Warrey

Meeting closed at 2:52 PM

Delores Shimek, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1514: Political Subdivisions Committee (Rep. Longmuir, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (9 YEAS, 3 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1514 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

TESTIMONY

HB 1514

HB1514 – Relating to the Threshold for Passing a Bond in a Municipality

Mandan Public Schools – Dr. Mike Bitz, Superintendent

Good afternoon Chairman Longmuir and members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee. For the record, my name is Mike Bitz. I am fortunate to serve as the superintendent for Mandan Public Schools. I am here today in opposition to HB1514. I will be brief.

My dad is 87 years old, and he still shows up to work every day. Despite only having an 8th grade education, he is the best teacher I ever had. One of the lessons he taught me is that the world is run by the people who show up. As legislators, you know this, you are sitting here in elected office because you showed up, and your supporters showed up at a district meeting. In many cases, less than 100 people of the 16,000+ that you represent, showed up to a district meeting and voted for your nomination. According to the ND Secretary of State's website, since 2014, statewide turnout in the June primary elections has ranged from 17% to just over 27%. If you applied the same standard to your elections that this legislation is requiring from municipalities, none of you would have even advanced to the Nov. general election. The world is run by those who show up and elections have consequences. This is not a bad thing. It allows our municipalities and our state to move forward.

I live in Dist. 34, and I am a Republican. I have attended several of the Dist. 34 meetings. I may be biased, but I think the Dist. 34 legislative team is one of the best in the state. As great as they are, in the 2020 primary Senator Larsen received 1,411 votes, Representative Porter receive 2,140

votes, and Representative Toman received 2,024 votes. Less than a year later, the same people voted in a Mandan School District Referendum and 2,551 voted yes, while 726 voted no. 78% of Mandan voters approved an $84 million bond issue. If the legislature is concerned about low turnout on an $84M municipal project, I trust that you will be equally concerned about even lower turnout at primary elections that send people to the legislature to make decisions on billions of dollars.

I urge you to vote NO on HB1514, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Testimony to
House Political Subs
February 9, 2023
Donnell Preskey, NDACo

RE: Opposition HB 1514

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I'm Donnell Preskey with the North Dakota Association of Counties. In that role, I serve as executive director for the North Dakota County Auditors Association. County Auditors want to make sure you are aware of some of the issues that will arise with HB 1514 regarding utilizing the pollbooks to establish the threshold of votes needed for approval of a bond election.

We realize the intent with this bill is to raise the threshold for approval of bond measures. However, using pollbook data is problematic for the following reasons:

- Pollbook data represents a snapshot in time.
- ND does not have voter registration and we do not require action from the voter when the voter moves within the State or outside the state to notify the county auditor. Therefore, the voter records in the Central Voter File are only as good as the information the voters provide regarding their address or updating their address with the Department of Transportation.
- County Auditors would seek clarification on 30% of qualified voters. Does this mean active voters which includes those that voted in the last 4 election cycles. Or total of active and inactive voters in CVF?
- The 30% requirement could delay election night results reporting due to calculation of "30% of qualified voters".

If the goal of this bill is to have a greater percentage of voters voting on these community issues, a better recommendation may be to move these elections to the general or primary election.

Burleigh Qualified Voters	2022 Turnout Primary	2022 Turnout General
72005	13417 (18.63%)	35746 (49.64%)
McKenzie Qualified Voters	2022 Turnout Primary	2022 Turnout General
9360	1330 (14.2%)	3,266 (34.89%)