

January 20, 2021

To: North Dakota House of Representatives  
Government and Veterans Affairs Committee  
Re: HB 1182

On January 21<sup>st</sup>, you will hear testimony for and against HB 1182. As an elected official, with 11 years' experience, I understand the challenges of balancing opposing opinions. In advance of my testimony, I want to thank all of you for considering a variety of insights.

HB 1182 seeks to attach political party affiliation to petitions and ballots for individuals running for positions at the school, municipal and county level. It is my assumption that the goal of this bill is to help voters better choose candidates that they believe represent their ideals. This goal is noble and certainly serves a purpose at a state or national level. However, decisions made at the local level, rarely, if ever, include philosophical or political ideals. I have served on Minot's City Council for 11 years and I could count on one hand the decisions that leaned left or right. As local representatives, we are in direct communication with our constituents, who are able to share their views on agenda items. Involving a political party would complicate, typically simple decisions to make. I am making an assumption with my next statement, but I sense that neither party will be interested in investing resources into local campaigns, so the printed "R" or "D" will not necessarily indicate the candidate's party affiliation.

In a nutshell, I believe that HB1182 is a solution looking for a problem, and I strongly encourage you to vote "No" on its passing.

Respectfully,  
Lisa M. Olson  
Minot City Council, President