

Testimony on House Bill 1256
House Government and Veterans Affairs
Loren DeWitz
2:00 PM, January 21, 2021

Chairman Kasper and members of the House Government and Veteran Affairs Committee, my name is Loren DeWitz. Currently I serve as District 8 Republican Party Chairman.

I have been involved in elections on the local, district, and statewide levels since the early 1970's. One observation that I have made is that years ago campaigning was on a much more personal level. Campaigning was accomplished by going door to door, using local newspaper ads, some radio and attending many community events such as church dinners, pancake suppers, parades, and auction sales, where-ever people gathered. Also, many community and county organization held forums for candidates to tell voters what they would like to accomplish. With that much personal contact, campaigns stayed on a more positive level.

In the past ten to fifteen years, we have seen a movement toward more use of Radio, TV, mail-out cards and social media. We have lost much of the personal contact. These types of campaigns tend to be more expensive and we see that those with the most money generally prevail. We have seen state-wide issues funded by people from outside of ND being successful. I don't think that the trend toward big money winning elections is good for North Dakota.

I believe that now is the time to start the discussion on this issue. Can it continue unchecked? Or do we look at some type of limits. These are not going to be easy decisions to make, but I hope there can be some discussions on this issue.

I support the concept behind HB 1256.