



Great Public Schools

Great Public Service

**Testimony on SB 2046
House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
March 19, 2021**

Chairman Kasper and members of the Committee for the record I am Nick Archuleta, president of North Dakota United. North Dakota United is a union of professionals including state, county, and municipal public employees. I rise today in support of SB 2046.

Mr. Chairman, ND United was fully supportive of the original version of this bill as it appeared to fulfill a priority of ours that we have had since the 2011 legislative session. That is to say that it represented the fourth year of funding that would set the PERS Fund on a trajectory to being fully funded. It was an elusive goal, and we were happy to see the original version of SB 2046 introduced this session.

This version of SB 2046 calls for employer and employee contributions to the Public Employee Retirement System of one-half percent beginning January of 2022. Temporary employees will see an increase of one percent. While the contribution rates are lower, North Dakota's dedicated public employees see this legislation as a step in the right direction and hope that in future sessions, PERS will receive the funding necessary to finally put it on a positive path to financial stability.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, state and political subdivision employees very much appreciate the benefits accorded them by their employers. They recognize that these benefits are vital to the recruitment and retention of highly skilled public employees, as do agency heads across government. They know that public employees have historically been paid less than their counterparts in the private sector and that a solid benefits package helps to attract highly skilled candidates to the public service workplace.

With that Chairman Kasper, on behalf of the men and women who provide the vital public services that North Dakotans have come to expect and deserve, I urge a Do Pass recommendation for SB 2046.