

Testimony SCR 4005
House Judiciary Committee

Don Morrison, North Dakota Voters First – March 24, 2021

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Judiciary Committee. My name is Don Morrison. I live in Bismarck and I am here as a volunteer for North Dakota Voters First, which is a non-partisan, grassroots North Dakota group working to strengthen our democracy, help make our elections and public policy more open, ethical, and accountable to the people of our state.

Increasing the percentage required to pass amendments to our state's constitution from 50 percent to 60 percent is a major change and should not be taken lightly.

The sponsors and supporters have said the reason they want to change the threshold need to amend the constitution is because of out of state money that supports the ballot measures.

North Dakota Voters First agrees that huge amounts of money in campaigns is a problem. SCR 4005 does not deal with the problem of out-of-state money by efforts to change our constitution. In fact, it may make the problem of out-of-state money worse, because more money will be needed to reach the 60 percent threshold.

Rather than make it more difficult for the voters of our state to be heard, we would suggest there are much better ways to tackle the problem of money in campaigns. One of those solutions would be to require reporting of independent expenditures that are currently not required to be reported. .

In the end, we should trust the voters. We recommend that the Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee give SB 4005 a Do Not Pass.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our input on this issues.