

**Testimony SB 2228**  
**Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee**  
January 28, 2021

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee, good afternoon. 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.

I would like to address two positive sections of SB 2228.

First, this bill provides a redistricting process that would lessen the influence of partisan politics. People in North Dakota would like fewer districts with squiggly borders, obviously drawn to make sure certain candidates or a certain party has greater advantages. Article IV of the North Dakota Constitution and North Dakota law requires districts to be compact. We would also recommend that the new district map respect communities as much as possible, especially city, tribal, and county boundaries. The nonpartisan commission in this bill would provide a great opportunity for drawing legislative district lines fairly.

Second, this bill keeps the redistricting process open and public. That is what we do in a country that is based on citizens participating in government. More often, government functions well when it is open and closer to the people.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. North Dakota Voters First encourages you to put a Do Pass on SB 2228.