

Committee members, my name is Jocelyn Backman (citizen of District 13) and I am writing IN SUPPORT of HB 1259 relating to creating and enacting a new section to Chapter 23.1-07 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to participation in a state or national wastewater surveillance system.

There is a big difference between “testing” wastewater to protect citizens from contamination, and “surveillance” that can be used to restrict and limit citizens movement based on what is found. I know this type of thing was used on at least a couple College campuses in ND during the Covid pandemic where students were forced to quarantine due to finding Covid in the wastewater, even though none of the students had symptom. This is very dangerous and not a good thing to be doing to ND citizens, or any citizens for that matter.

I know the city of West Fargo is allowing this surveillance to happen and the citizens were never notified of this occurring. My assumption is MOST of citizens would not approve of this occurring, especially since they were never notified of it happening.

If we allow this to happen, it could be a slippery slope that could lead to infringing on rights, please vote YES on HB 1259.

Thank you