

TESTIMONY SB 2188

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee

North Dakota Senate

Chairman Burckhard and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of SB 2188. My name is Matt Bjornson, Co-owner of Bjornson Oil Company, a third-generation family owned business based in Cavalier, ND. The challenges of running a small business are many. Complying with and being aware of the vast number of regulations and rules on the National, State, and local level is the most challenging part of my job. As a family business that puts our family name above the door, compliance with all of those regulations is important.

SB 2188 is a good step forward in making the sales and marketing of products we sell across all of our communities where we do business uniform. SB 2188 addresses a problem that already exists in our state, a problem which can get worse. I don't think we want to get to the point where New York was, where the mayor thought regulating the size of soda pop drinks was important. In most types of consumer merchandise retail stores, the participation in vendor programs is an important part of buying the product at the best possible price and being able to participate in consumer promotions with the participation of the vendor or manufacturer. Uniform regulations make that process much easier for those of us with locations in different municipalities.

Finally, even in the small town where I live, in the past I have found it frustrating to keep track of what the City is up to. Utilizing the "emergency" clause in the open meeting laws, past Mayors and councils have bypassed the norms of operating in the light of day and made decisions or purchases which if known about by the general public would have never happened. Trying to keep up with local government entities 100 or 200 miles away is next to impossible for a small business such as ours.

The ask here is simple. Uniformity, Clarity, Fairness. Not a hodgepodge of rules and regulations that hamper small business in North Dakota. If a particular item of consumer merchandise needs to be regulated then the place to consider that is here at the state capitol, in the light of day. Thank you.