

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 1039 & HB 1040 RELATING TO THE
ND PERS DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN**

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Meeting Scheduled at 8:30 AM 1/13/2023.

Honorable Chairman Schauer & House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Members:

HB 1039 and HB 1040 A BILL relating to the public employees retirement system and to amend section 54-52-02.15 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to public employees retirement system main plan – Closure to new hires – Multiple plan membership.

I strongly **OPPOSE** closure of the public employees retirement system defined benefit main plan. I currently serve as the Mayor of the City of Wahpeton and as the Richland County Emergency Manager; for 35 years, my entire working life, I have worked in public service. I get up in the middle of the night if a township road washes out, my city experiences severe weather and every time our local volunteer fire department is called to service. I genuinely believe the greatest rewards in life are earned in service to others.

I have frequently been approached to consider working in other states for other agencies; I have not pursued any of those offers because I am committed to my community, my state, and the people I serve. Part of the strength of that commitment comes from knowing I can provide for my family now and when I retire thanks to the security of the ND Public Employees defined benefit plan. I understand the intent of the proposed bills is to fulfill the pension obligations of current enrollees; I can assure you I would have pursued and accepted employment outside the State of North Dakota with an agency that provides a meaningful defined benefit plan if I were not offered one.

To me the difference between defined benefit and defined contribution comes down to trust and dependability or working simply in pursuit of money and opportunity. An employment relationship built on trust and dependability is a strong bond of infinite potential, mutually beneficial to both parties. Without trust and dependability the employment focus will move to money and opportunity – not the most meaningful traits of public service.

Please consider solutions that do not eliminate the defined benefit plan for the next generation of public employees.

Submitted with high regard;



Brett Lambrecht, Mayor
City of Wahpeton