

Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am Zac Echola, a resident of the illustrious city of Fargo and a fervent advocate of the democratic process. I have taken the liberty of submitting testimony to you to voice my opposition to the proposed House Bill 1273. This insidious piece of legislation seeks to deprive North Dakota's voting populace of one of the most sacrosanct democratic principles: **choice**.

As a resident of Fargo, I have seen firsthand the problems that have plagued our elections for far too long. However, with the implementation of approval voting, we have found a solution to these issues. This system, which was embraced by the overwhelming majority of Fargo voters, has given us a fairer and more representative election process.

Indeed, as a participant in the recent election in Fargo, I was able to bear witness to the miracle of approval voting in all its splendor. The people, in their infinite wisdom, were empowered to cast their ballots for multiple candidates for mayor and commissioner, rather than being limited to the ignoble choice of settling for the lesser of two evils. This system also helps to keep candidates who lack true popular support from winning elections, preventing what I like to call the "whackadoodle candidate" problem.

Therefore, I implore you, O wise and learned members of the committee, to reject this nefarious bill and preserve the right of local communities to determine their own election methods. Approval voting is a fair and transparent system, a veritable panacea for the ills of democracy, and should be kept available to all North Dakota voters should they so choose, as Fargo residents like myself already have. To ban it would be to rob the people of their voice and to negate the fundamental principles of democracy.

I remain,

Zac Echola

A Resident of Fargo, North Dakota, and a Defender of Democracy