

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2275
Finance and Taxation Committee
January 24, 2023

Todd Feland, City Administrator
City of Grand Forks, ND

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Todd Feland and I'm the City Administrator for the City of Grand Forks. I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and express my support to this legislation.

When "Operation Prairie Dog" was first introduced in the 2019 Legislative Session, we were very supportive and appreciative of the program in Grand Forks. We saw it as an added tool in our toolbox when it comes to funding for our local infrastructure projects. When the \$400 M Strategic Investment and Improvements Fund (SIIF) bucket was added before the Municipal/County and Township bucket it made the funds unreliable and unpredictable for us locally to include in our planning for projects.

During the 2021-23 biennium, the Municipal/County and Township bucket did not get filled due to lowered oil prices and the \$400 M SIIF bucket being placed in front of this key local infrastructure funding source.

Reliable funding for infrastructure projects is critical in order for leaders to plan ahead, create shovel ready projects, and to maximize funding. It is also important to ensure that high priority projects can move forward as efficiently as possible throughout the planning, environmental, design, bidding, and construction stages.

With the removal of the SIIF bucket before the Municipal/County and Township bucket in the Operation Prairie Dog timeline, we can start to incorporate this funding source into our regular planning process for our local projects.

Receiving the Prairie Dog funds sooner and with more certainty is the reason we support SB 2275.

Thank you.