

HB 1116 Testimony

To the State and Local Government Committee

*Statement of Intent: The intent of this legislation is to require campaign finance reporting for school board elections with the goal of increasing election transparency.*

*School Board Campaign Finance Reporting Resolution*

The intent of this bill is to amend section 15.1-09-08, 16.1-05.1-02.3, and 16.1-08.1-05 of the North Dakota Century Code to include language and references for required financial reporting for school board candidates and groups funding those candidates.

Whereas, section 15.1-09-07 states; “Unless otherwise provided by law, a school district election must be conducted and the votes must be canvassed in the same manner as in the election of county officers.”

Whereas, the instruction document provided by the Secretary of State office titled *Running for County & Multi-County District Office under the section titled Campaign Finance and Disclosure* states; “Candidates for county offices must file financial disclosure statements pursuant to subsection 6 of NDCC § 16.1-08.1-02.3.”

Whereas, subsection 6 of NDCC § 16.1-08.1-02.3 states; “A candidate for county office and a candidate committee for a candidate for county office shall file statements under this chapter with the county auditor. A candidate for city office who is required to file a statement under this chapter and a candidate committee for such a candidate shall file statements with the city auditor. Any other person required to file a statement under this section shall file the statement with the secretary of state.”

Some questions were raised on the use of language in Section 5 on Page 3 which reads, “A candidate for school district office in a school district with a population under five thousand and a candidate committee for the candidate are exempt from this section”. The decision to utilize this language has two parts. First is to mirror existing century code in the same section. Second is based on the fact schools are predominantly funded by property taxes and districts already have a base line of population based on mill levy collections. Passing this bill will appropriately reflect the original intent of sections of century code that require campaign finance reporting.

Thank you,



Deven Styczynski