

**Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota  
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 7, 2025**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1280  
(Representatives Brandenburg, Beltz, Grueneich, Headland, Pyle, Schreiber-Beck)  
(Senators Conley, Erbele, Luick, Myrdal, Wanzek, Weber)

AN ACT to amend and reenact section 61-16.1-45 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to maintenance of drainage projects.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

**SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 61-16.1-45 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**61-16.1-45. Maintenance of drainage projects.**

1. If it is desired to provide for maintenance of an assessment drain in whole or in part by means of special assessments, the levy in any year for the maintenance may not exceed four dollars per acre [.40 hectare] on any agricultural lands benefited by the drain. The district, at its own discretion, may utilize either of the following methods for levying special assessments for the maintenance:
  - a. Agricultural lands that carried the highest assessment when the drain was originally established, or received the most benefits under a reassessment of benefits, may be assessed the maximum amount of four dollars per acre [.40 hectare]. The assessment of other agricultural lands in the district must be based upon the proportion that the assessment of benefits at the time of construction or at the time of any reassessment of benefits bears to the assessment of the benefits of the agricultural land assessed the full four dollars per acre [.40 hectare]. Nonagricultural property must be assessed the sum in any one year as the ratio of the benefits under the original assessments or any reassessment bears to the assessment of agricultural lands bearing the highest assessment.
  - b. Agricultural lands must be assessed uniformly throughout the entire assessed area. Nonagricultural property must be assessed an amount not to exceed two dollars for each five hundred dollars of taxable valuation of the nonagricultural property.
2. In case the maximum levy or assessment on agricultural and nonagricultural property for any year will not produce an amount sufficient to cover the cost of cleaning out and repairing the drain, a water resource board may accumulate a fund in an amount not exceeding the sum produced by the maximum permissible levy for six years.
3. If the cost of, or obligation for, the cleaning and repairing of any drain exceeds the total amount that may be levied by the board in any six-year period, the board shall obtain the approval of the majority of the landowners as determined by chapter 61-16.1 before obligating the district for the costs.
4. If a board holds an election to approve a project under subsection 3, an affected landowner receiving a benefit from a project may not vote on the question of obligating the district for the costs if the landowner has failed to pay the required assessment.

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Speaker of the House

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President of the Senate

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Chief Clerk of the House

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Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1280.

House Vote:    Yeas 91            Nays 0            Absent 3

Senate Vote:    Yeas 42            Nays 4            Absent 1

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Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at \_\_\_\_\_ M. on \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

Approved at \_\_\_\_\_ M. on \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor

Filed in this office this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025,

at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of State