



# WESTERN DAKOTA ENERGY ASSOCIATION

January 30, 2025

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Testimony of:

Geoff Simon, Lobbyist #144  
in support of HB 1577 – Wastewater infrastructure grants  
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Chairman Porter and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

On behalf of the city, county and school district members of the Western Dakota Energy Association (WDEA), we wish to express our strong support for HB 1577, which provides an appropriation to establish a wastewater infrastructure grant program within the Department of Environmental Quality.

The state of North Dakota has a history of providing assistance to local governments to support water development projects, but currently has no mechanism to support the essential expansion of wastewater treatment systems associated with economic development opportunities in our state. This legislation is of particular interest to the City of Medora, one of the members of our association. The city and the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation (TRMF) are in negotiation to develop the necessary water and wastewater facilities to accommodate TRMF's development plans in concert with the soon-to-be-completed Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum.

Among TRMF's development priorities is construction of a new 100-room motel to house the influx of tourists expected to visit the library. However, TRMF has minimal infrastructure in place to support this future development. Negotiations with the City of Medora are aimed at connecting to the city's water and sewer systems, which will necessitate projects to expand the capacity of both.

Specific to the wastewater needs, the development will require expansion of the City of Medora's treatment lagoons. This project would require the city to acquire real estate for the expansion, along with sewer main improvements and a lift station replacement project, leading to a total cost estimated between \$3 million and \$7 million. As you can imagine, this is a daunting expense for a community with barely 100 permanent residents. Accordingly, both TRMF and the city are excited about the potential opportunity that would be afforded by the wastewater infrastructure grants provided through the passage of HB 1577.

WDEA appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in support of this legislation, and urges your favorable consideration to further develop our state's top attraction.

Geoff Simon  
Executive Director

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