



**Power  
Companies**  
OF NORTH DAKOTA

Good morning, Chairman Longmuir and members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

My name is Dennis Pathroff, and I am a lobbyist with the GA Group. I am here today on behalf of the Power Companies of North Dakota ("PCND") to express our strong support for SB 2069, with an important amendment.

PCND is a coalition of the state's leading shareholder-owned gas and electric utilities, including MDU Resources Group, Xcel Energy, Otter Tail Power Company, and ALLETE. Collectively, our member companies serve over 427,000 North Dakota customers, employ more than 1,200 North Dakotans, and maintain critical power generation and transmission infrastructure across our state.

SB 2069 provides an essential safeguard to ensure the timely publication of legal notices related to utility projects and regulatory proceedings. The bill continues the existing newspaper publication requirements and introduces a much-needed backstop – if a newspaper fails to publish a required notice, a posting with the Secretary of State would fulfill the legal obligation.

This safeguard is necessary because missed publications have resulted in costly project delays, regulatory setbacks, and additional burdens on utilities. One recent example of this issue occurred when a local newspaper failed to publish a notice for public hearing related to Basin Electric's Leland Olds Station-to-Tande 345-kV Transmission Project. A hearing originally held on February 26 will have to be redone and a hearing scheduled for March 6 was postponed. Fortunately, this appears to result in only a one-month delay. In another example, a local paper failed to publish a notice for the Merricourt Wind Project, forcing the originally scheduled June 28, 2017, hearing to be rescheduled. The hearing ultimately took place on October 6, 2017, causing a four-month delay and added costs

While PCND fully supports the intent of SB 2069, we strongly urge an amendment to appropriate sufficient funds to the Secretary of State's office to cover administrative costs related to the required website. Without dedicated funding, the administrative burden could prevent the successful execution of this much-needed safeguard.

We urge this committee to issue a "Do Pass as Amended" recommendation.

Thank you, Chairman Longmuir and committee members, for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.