



A proud heritage - A promising future

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**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1577
SENATE ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MARCH 21, 2025**

Chairman Patten, Vice-Chair Kessel, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Jerry Obenauer, and I have the distinct privilege of servicing as President of the Board of City Commissioners for the City of Hazen, and I provide testimony in support of HB 1577.

As in most smaller communities, infrastructure development and upgrades are a major part of city budgets. While we are always seeking funding from many sources, both federal and state, to supplement local funds in addressing these needs, a grant program such as this can be a lifeline to Hazen residents and most rural communities.

The City of Hazen has been a recipient of State Water Grants, and this program has been invaluable to us. A similar program, assisting municipalities in addressing the ever-rising costs of wastewater infrastructure will only enhance the quality of service and overall quality of life for our communities, large and small.

Based on information gathered by the State of ND, there are currently more than three hundred (300) sewer projects/needs with a total cost of \$1.7 billion dollars so there is a distinct need for funding assistance for all communities.

Understanding the fiscal responsibility of the legislature, we urge a **DO PASS** recommendation on HB 1577.

Respectfully submitted
Jerry Obenauer, President
Hazen City Commission
Hazen, ND
Attest: Monte Erhardt
City Auditor