

Professional Fire Fighters of North Dakota

Darren Schimke, President | 218-779-4122 | dschimke@wiktel.com

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Senate State and Local Government

Re: HB 1259

Madam Chair Roers and members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee.

My name is Darren Schimke, President of the Professional Fire Fighters of North Dakota (PFFND), representing 420 professional firefighters across the State of North Dakota. We appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of HB 1259.

Admittedly, the passage of HB 1259 will not negatively affect all members of the PFFND. What it will do is effect multiple Locals along the North Dakota-Minnesota border. These effected Local memberships consist of 46% of the PFFND membership. Of those members, approximately 9% live across the North Dakota border in Minnesota. The passage of HB 1259 would negatively impact those firefighters. Impacts include commutes to and from their fire stations, sleep patterns, family lives, dropping and picking up their children from school/daycare, children's sporting events, doctor appointments. The list could go on and on.

From a larger point of view, taken from an article in the Grand Forks Herald, residents of Grand Forks, Fargo, and Wahpeton consist of 1/3 of the entire population of North Dakota. With those cities located right on the border, HB 1259 could have the above-mentioned negative impacts on a very large number of residents.

I may add, the PFFND would not be opposed to HB 1259 if all the surrounding states bordering North Dakota were to pass a bill with the same language contained within HB 1259.

The PFFND appreciates this opportunity and respectfully requests a Do NOT Pass recommendation from the Senate State and Local Government.

Thank you,

Darren Schimke