



# North Dakota House of Representatives

STATE CAPITOL  
600 EAST BOULEVARD  
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360



## Representative Landon Bahl

District 17  
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## COMMITTEES:

Industry, Business and Labor  
Government and Veterans Affairs

Madam Chair Roers and members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee, For the record, my name is Landon Bahl, and I have the honor of representing the citizens of District 17 in the North Dakota House of Representatives.

I stand before you today to introduce House Bill 1408, which proposes transitioning the North Dakota Legislature to annual sessions beginning in 2027. This bill takes a proactive approach to modernizing our legislative process while preserving the integrity of our existing framework.

### Key Provisions of House Bill 1408:

- Maintains the 80-day legislative limit, this bill does not increase total session days but instead distributes them more effectively over two years.
- Shifts the legislature to annual sessions starting in 2027.
- Limits each year's session to 70 calendar days, with adjournment likely by early March.
- Provides flexibility in structuring sessions under the jurisdiction of legislative management per the amendment passed out with my testimony.
- Results in a fiscal note reduction for the biennium.

### Broader Positive Impacts of House Bill 1408:

- Enhances fiscal and economic responsiveness by allowing more timely decision-making.
- Addresses the challenges of term limits by helping legislators gain experience more efficiently, ensuring continuity of governance.
- Strengthens the legislative branch to ensure it remains an equal branch of government, which would further preserve institutional knowledge and improve policymaking.
- Improves interim committee effectiveness through enhanced research, analysis, and public engagement, leading to more well-developed and thoroughly vetted policies.
- Attracts high-quality legislative candidates by making public service more accessible. Annual sessions would allow more North Dakotans, especially those unable to commit to four months at a time to serve, fostering a more experienced, diverse, and representative legislature.

Madam Chair Roers and members of the committee, House Bill 1408 strengthens our legislative process, improves decision-making, and ensures long-term efficiency in government. I urge you to support this effort to build a more effective and accountable legislature for the people of North Dakota.

Thank you for your time, and I welcome any questions.

Regards,  
Landon Bahl

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

### HOUSE BILL NO. 1408

Introduced by

Representatives Bahl, Lefor, Louser, D. Ruby, Schauer, Weisz, Hagert

Senators Bekkedahl, Roers, Schaible, Sickler, Davison

1 A BILL ~~for an Act to amend and reenact section 54-03-02 of the North Dakota Century Code,~~  
2 ~~relating to annually reconvened sessions of the legislative assembly; and to provide an effective~~  
3 ~~date.~~ for an Act to amend and reenact section 54-03-02 of the North Dakota Century Code,  
4 relating to annually reconvened sessions of the legislative assembly; and to provide an effective  
5 date.

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

7 ~~— **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 54-03-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is~~  
8 ~~amended and reenacted as follows:~~

9 ~~— **54-03-02. When legislative assembly meets.**~~

10 ~~— 1. The legislative assembly shall meet at the seat of government in the month of~~  
11 ~~December following the election of the its members thereof for organizational and~~  
12 ~~orientation purposes and shall thereafter recess until the time provided in~~  
13 ~~subsection 2.~~

14 ~~— 2. The legislative assembly shall reconvene at twelve noon annually for a number of days~~  
15 ~~to be determined by the legislative assembly, but the number of days must be~~  
16 ~~scheduled within a seventy calendar day period each year, subject to subsection 3.~~

17 ~~— a. Each year, the legislative assembly shall convene on the first Tuesday~~  
18 ~~Monday~~  
19 ~~after the third day in January of the year following the organizational session as~~  
20 ~~provided in subsection 1 or at twelve noon on a date selected by the legislative~~  
~~management but not earlier than January second nor later than January eleventh~~

1 of the year following the organizational session and, following. ~~At the close of~~  
2 ~~business of the regular session, the legislative assembly shall adjourn recess~~  
3 ~~subject to subsection 3.~~

4 ~~b. The first week of each year the legislative assembly is convened, it shall convene~~  
5 ~~on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Thereafter, the~~  
6 ~~legislative assembly shall primarily convene on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,~~  
7 ~~and Thursday. The legislative assembly shall convene on Friday only as~~  
8 ~~determined by the legislative management with prior notice to the legislative~~  
9 ~~assembly. A standing committee of the legislative assembly may meet on a~~  
10 ~~Friday with prior notice to the presiding officer of the chamber.~~

11 ~~3. Notwithstanding a motion to adjourn sine die, the legislative assembly shall reconvene~~  
12 ~~as determined by the legislative management. The number of natural days used may~~  
13 ~~not exceed the number of natural days available under the constitution which have not~~  
14 ~~been previously used by that legislative assembly in regular session under~~  
15 ~~subsection 2.~~

16 ~~4. The legislative management shall determine the structure and logistics of the~~  
17 ~~legislative session.~~

18 ~~**SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Act becomes effective on January 1, 2027.~~

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29 ~~not earlier than January second nor~~reconvene annually at a date and time determined  
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