

HB 1479 Testimony – Senate State & Local Government Committee
Rep. Karen Karls – April 3, 2025

Good Morning! I am here today to present HB 1479 which seeks to designate October 1st as ND Constitution Day. This comes at a request from my constituent Bryan Pechtl after he interviewed me for his 701 Civics podcast. I've included his email message which contains a lot of information about his mission.

Rep. Karls,

As noted in our visit a few weeks ago, I am hoping to interview you for the newly created '701 Civics' podcast, an effort to help inform students and citizens across North Dakota about the role of state government offices and officials that serve in state government.

I am in the process of setting up interviews with agency leaders for the '701 Civics' podcast. The goals of the 701 Civics podcast are simple and straightforward:

- Provide a non-political format for listeners to increase one's knowledge about state government.
- Provide teachers and students with a succinct, useful resource to find information about state government offices and office holders.
- Increase listener understanding of the role and purpose of state government offices.
- Develop an understanding of the role of elected officials in their positions.

Each month during the normal school year, I email over 650 social studies teachers in North Dakota and provide them with resources and links to civics-related materials. The monthly mailings have been well-received, and I want to add more to North Dakota 'teacher toolboxes.' As a former social studies teacher, and someone that conducts educational outreach, I am asking for your help in bringing awareness of state government to North Dakota students in an effort to increase their understanding of, and participation in, state and local government.

How can you help? In your role as a legislator in state government, I would like to schedule a time to visit and record a short podcast session regarding what it is like to be a legislator in state government and how the House works, from the point of view of a legislator. I will bring an audio recorder and a microphone, and the session will be as conversational as possible, lasting approximately 20 minutes.

Below, you will find questions that I would like to include in our discussion, and that I feel will be of most benefit to listeners. My goal is to have you as comfortable and prepared as possible as we reach out to educate the citizens of North Dakota about state government.

I would very much like to schedule a time that works best for your schedule in a location that is most convenient for you. If you have any questions, please reach out any time. Thank you,

Bryan Pechtl Email: bryan.pechtl@gmail.com

House Legislator and State Government

Life as a Legislator

1. Please provide a brief biography about yourself and your motivation to run for a seat in the North Dakota House of Representatives.
2. How do you balance the demands of legislative work with your personal life?
3. Describe the typical day as a representative during the session.
4. How many committees do legislators serve on and how are assignments determined?
5. How do legislators prepare for committee meetings and hearings?
6. How do legislators collaborate with other representatives, both within one's party and across the aisle?

Legislative Process

1. Please explain the process of drafting a piece of legislation from idea to introduction?
2. How does a bill move through the North Dakota House of Representatives?
3. What role does research play in legislative work?
4. What are some of the most challenging aspects of legislative work?
5. What is the role of lobbyists in the legislative process?

Constituent Engagement

1. How do legislators stay informed about the needs and concerns of your constituents?
2. How do legislators gather input from your constituents on proposed legislation?
3. What strategies do legislators use to effectively communicate with your constituents?
4. How do legislators engage with local businesses and organizations to inform your policy decisions?
5. What steps do legislators take to ensure transparency and accountability in your work?

Policy

1. How do legislators measure the success of legislative efforts?
2. How do legislators stay current with national and state-level policy changes?

Final Notes

1. What advice would you give to someone interested in pursuing a career in politics?
2. What do you see as the biggest opportunities and challenges for North Dakota in the coming years?

Final thoughts?

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

PROCLAMATION

NORTH DAKOTA CONSTITUTION DAY

OCTOBER 1, 2024

WHEREAS, on October 1, 1889, the people of North Dakota, by an overwhelming majority, voted to ratify the state Constitution, about one month before North Dakota became the 39th state to join the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, by the Constitution, the State of North Dakota goes forth to pioneer a statehood which aids in protecting the freedoms of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Constitution consists of a preamble and 15 articles, which includes the North Dakota Declaration of Rights, the elective franchise and powers reserved to the people, the separation of powers between the three branches of government and the duties and powers of each and more; and

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Constitution was implemented to protect and promote the rights and liberties of all citizens of the great State of North Dakota; and the ideals and values embodied in the North Dakota Constitution serve as the foundation of our state's responsibilities, powers and purpose; and


WHEREAS, the civic culture of the citizens of North Dakota depends on a well-informed society with an understanding of the North Dakota Constitution and the rights afforded to all citizens therein; and


WHEREAS, through the Constitution of North Dakota we obtain guidance and structure as to operate the state in a way that allows the citizenry to participate and elect those who govern our state with an unceasing commitment to said freedoms and the rule of law; and

WHEREAS, North Dakotans continue to encourage and foster a greater knowledge and understanding of the North Dakota Constitution to help preserve the classical democratic-republic ideals celebrated and protected in this momentous document

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim
October 1, 2024, **NORTH DAKOTA CONSTITUTION DAY** in the State of North Dakota




Doug Burgum
GOVERNOR


Michael Howe
SECRETARY OF STATE