

TESTIMONY OF

Aaron Carranza, Division Director, Regulatory Division

Chairman Patten, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I am Aaron Carranza the Regulatory Division Director of the Department of Water Resources (Department). I'm here today to provide testimony in support of SB 2027.

This bill represents the interim efforts of the Department, the Insurance Department, the League of Cities, the Township Officers Association, and the Association of Counties working with the interim Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee to address the Township Study directed by the 68th Legislative Assembly via SB 2365.

The Department was engaged throughout the study and provided comments throughout the interim.

This bill provides an articulated means of establishing, identifying, and tracking which political entity has floodplain management responsibilities outside of municipal limits throughout the state. The study arose due to the lack of such clarity and tracking mechanisms, leading to North Dakotans paying for and carrying invalid Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) insurance policies.

The Department currently has the directive under N.D.C.C. § 61-16.2-03 to support the collection and distribution of information related to flooding and floodplain management. The Department also has the directive to, to the maximum extent practical, aid in the education and application of sound floodplain management practices throughout the state.

As part of this directive, the Department supports all North Dakota communities participating in or interested in joining FEMA's NFIP and the local adoption of compliant floodplain management ordinances. This directive will be maintained under the proposed bill.

A new Department directive through this proposed bill is contained in Section 10, which creates a new publicly facing "Floodplain Management Authority" repository. This repository will house information that is reported annually to the Department by the local entities, and will assist homeowners, community officials, or insurance producers in identifying local floodplain management authority statewide as it has been conveyed to the Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I'm happy to answer any questions.