

2025 SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

SB 2065

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2065
1/16/2025

Relating to the formation of irrigation districts.
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10:16 a.m. Chairman Patten opened the meeting.

Members present: Chairman Patten, Vice Chairman Kessel, Senators: Beard, Boehm, Enget, Gerhardt, and Van Oosting.

Discussion Topics:

- Update process for forming irrigation districts
- Eliminate redundancy

10:16 a.m. Patrick Fridgen, Division Director Planning and Education, Department of Water Resources, testified in favor and submitted testimony #29158.

10:26 a.m. Chairman Patten closed the hearing.

10:27 a.m. Senator Kessel moved a do pass.

10:27 a.m. Senator Enget seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Dale Patten	Y
Senator Greg Kessel	Y
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Keith Boehm	Y
Senator Mark Enget	Y
Senator Justin Gerhardt	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion passed 7-0-0.

Senator Enget will carry the bill.

10:29 a.m. Chairman Patten closed the hearing.

Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2065 ([25.8050.01000](#))

Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Sen. Patten, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2065 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.



Testimony in Support of
SB 2065
Senate Energy & Natural Resources
January 16, 2025

TESTIMONY OF

Patrick Fridgen, Division Director, Planning and Education

Chairman Patten, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee – I am Patrick Fridgen, Director of the Planning and Education Division for the Department of Water Resources (DWR). I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill (SB) 2065 related to requirements pertaining to the formation of irrigation districts.

As outlined in North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) § 61-05-08, in the beginning stages of forming a new irrigation district, a petitioning entity must first create a feasibility report that, among other elements, includes detailed maps of the proposed district and related features, water source information, applicable storage locations, preliminary designs of conveyance systems and other works, and soils compatibility. What is not required of the petitioner, is a probable cost estimation, which per North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) § 61-05-10 is currently the responsibility of the DWR.

Despite the detailed requirements included in the petitioning entity's feasibility report that is ultimately submitted to the DWR to make a determination on the proposed irrigation district, and before scheduling the public hearing, N.D.C.C. § 61-05-10 then also requires DWR to prepare "a summary report showing the probable cost of the proposed works."

Since the petitioning entity is already required to develop the feasibility report, it seems redundant to have DWR also develop a summary report. In addition, since the petitioning entity and their consultants will have completed preliminary designs of all proposed conveyance systems and other works in sufficient detail to show the methods of construction, they are far better suited to prepare probable costs than the DWR.

For these reasons, the proposed changes to N.D.C.C. § 61-05-10 would specify that DWR could make a determination regarding the feasibility of the proposed irrigation district based on the petitioner's already-completed report. In addition, the proposed modifications would place the requirement of estimating probable costs on the petitioning entity.

We believe these changes provide for a more appropriate and efficient process for petitioners seeking to establish irrigation districts. For these reasons, we respectfully request your support and approval of SB 2065.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony in support of SB 2065, and I will stand for any questions you might have.

2025 HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

SB 2065

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

SB 2065

3/6/2025

Relating to the formation of irrigation districts.
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2:10 p.m. Chairman Porter called the hearing to order.

Members Present: Chairman Porter, Vice Chairman Anderson, Vice Chair Novak,
Representatives: Dockter, Hagert, Headland, Heinert, Johnson, Marschall, Olson, M.
Ruby, Conmy, Foss

Discussion Topics:

- Feasibility study
- Formation of irrigation districts
- Conveyance systems

2:11 p.m. Patrick Fridgen, Division Director, Department of Water Resources, testified in favor and submitted testimony. #38909

2:15 p.m. Chairman Porter closed the hearing.

Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk



Testimony in Support of
SB 2065
House Energy & Natural Resources
March 6, 2025

TESTIMONY OF

Patrick Fridgen, Division Director, Planning and Education

Chairman Porter, and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee – I am Patrick Fridgen, Director of the Planning and Education Division for the Department of Water Resources (DWR). I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill (SB) 2065 related to requirements pertaining to the formation of irrigation districts.

As outlined in North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) § 61-05-08, in the beginning stages of forming a new irrigation district, a petitioning entity must first create a feasibility report that, among other elements, includes detailed maps of the proposed district and related features, water source information, applicable storage locations, preliminary designs of conveyance systems and other works, and soils compatibility. What is not required of the petitioner, is a probable cost estimation, which per North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) § 61-05-10 is currently the responsibility of the DWR.

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For these reasons, the proposed changes to N.D.C.C. § 61-05-10 would specify that DWR could make a determination regarding the feasibility of the proposed irrigation district based on the petitioner's already-completed report. In addition, the proposed modifications would place the requirement of estimating probable costs on the petitioning entity.

We believe these changes provide for a more appropriate and efficient process for petitioners seeking to establish irrigation districts. For these reasons, we respectfully request your support of SB 2065.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony in support of SB 2065, and I will stand for any questions you might have.

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

SB 2065

3/6/2025

Relating to the formation of irrigation districts.
--

3:04 p.m. Chairman Porter called the hearing to order.

Members Present: Chairman Porter, Vice Chairman Anderson, Vice Chair Novak,
Representatives: Dockter, Hagert, Headland, Heinert, Johnson, Marschall, Olson, Ruby,
Conmy, Foss

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

3:04 p.m. Representative Dockter moved a Do Pass.

3:04 p.m. Representative Hagert seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Todd Porter	Y
Representative Dick Anderson	Y
Representative Anna Novak	AB
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative Jason Dockter	Y
Representative Austin Foss	Y
Representative Jared c. Hagert	Y
Representative Craig Headland	Y
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Jorin Johnson	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Jeremy L. Olson	Y
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y

Motion carried: 12-0-1

3:05 p.m. Representative Conmy moved to place on Consent calendar

3:05 p.m. Representative Foss seconded the motion.

Voice vote: Motion Carried

Bill carrier: Representative Conmy

3:05 p.m. Chairman Porter closed the hearing.

Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2065 ([25.8050.01000](#))

Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Rep. Porter, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** and **BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). SB 2065 was placed on the Tenth order on the calendar.