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*A proud heritage - A promising future*

January 23, 2023

Senator Kannianen, Senator Weber, Senator Magrum, Senator Patten, Senator Piepkorn & Senator Rummel  
Senate Finance and Taxation Committee

Re: SB 2275

I am contacting the committee in support of SB 2275 allocating funds to the municipal infrastructure fund prior to funding the Strategic Investment and Improvement Fund.

The City of Hazen, Mercer County ND, has an estimated population of 2,440 residents, with many fixed income households. We, unlike many cities our size and smaller, are very fortunate to have a strong agricultural and energy production industry in our area, which is most beneficial in selecting, and funding, projects for the benefit of our citizens.

Operation Prairie Dog has been a vital piece of our project funding as other revenues continue to decrease, and costs increase. We were able to use these funds to meet the majority of the city's cost-share requirements for our water storage tank replacement project, that addressed low pressure areas of our city to ensure proper fire flow, in case of emergency.

We are in the process of updating our comprehensive plan, in conjunction with developing a strategic economic development plan, and have created a Capital Improvement Project list with some high priority needs, such as sanitary sewer review, cleaning, and repairs. As well as completing our inventory of lead water service lines for replacement and also to achieve compliance with the Backflow Prevention Cross-Contamination Program. Federal funds and Prairie Dog funds are vital to these projects as we work to keep costs to our citizens at a minimum.

I thank you for your time, and service, and ask that the committee consider a Do-Pass recommendation on SB 2275. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Monte J Erhardt  
City Auditor  
City of Hazen