

February 16, 2023

**Senate Workforce Development Committee
Senate Bill 2170**

Good morning Chairman Wobbema and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee:

My name is Tom Schimelfenig from Bowdon. I am here in support of Senate Bill 2170, which would reduce the minimum age for working in construction. I have been in the construction business for 45 years. My wife and I have raised five children, three boys and two girls. They all helped their father in the business in one way or another. My three sons were with me most of the time, learning the trade.

I feel it is important to get young people involved in this industry. It builds your knowledge and character. We need to get youth away from the video games, as most of them promote sex and violence.

I attended a meeting in Nashville in 2019 on the workforce problem in the onsite wastewater industry. It was stated that 80% of those people will be retiring the next five years. I am one of the 80%. Some of the discussions centered around this age group – how to get them involved and overcome the limitations set by our government. I believe this bill is an excellent step forward for North Dakota. I urge a “do pass” on SB 2170.

Thank you for allowing me to speak, and I will stand for any questions.