

Testimony Prepared for  
House Political Subdivisions  
March 5, 2021  
By: Amber J. Fiesel, Attorney at Law

RE: SB2233 Rural Attorney Grant

House Political Subdivisions Chair Dockter, Vice-Chair Pyle, Representatives:

My name is Amber J. Fiesel. I am a licensed attorney in the State of North Dakota, and I am currently the Burke County State's Attorney, Assistant Mountrail County State's Attorney, and have my own firm, Fiesel Law, P.C.

I support SB 2233. This Bill would create a attorney recruitment program for counties with populations of 15,000 or fewer and cities with populations of 5,000 or less. I think this program is vital to helping rural North Dakota attract and retain attorneys. When I graduated law school and prepared to move back to my hometown of Powers Lake, North Dakota, I looked into grant programs and other options available to me. I found that there was loan forgiveness for prosecutors that were practicing in rural areas. As I knew I was going to be a prosecutor, I looked into the program only to discover that you had to be a "full time" prosecutor to qualify. As many of you may know most of the counties in North Dakota only have part-time prosecutors, including Burke County. Therefore, I did not qualify for that program. The program proposed in SB 2233 would have been a extremely helpful to me had it been available when I graduated.

Additionally, I am currently the only practicing attorney doing civil work for almost an hour in each direction of me. This means that people are driving long distances to get to see an attorney. Additional attorneys are needed in our rural areas and this bill will provide the avenue for cities and counties to attract attorneys to come and practice in their areas.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please give SB 2233 a "do pass" recommendation.