

**2023 SENATE AGRICULTURE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**SB 2234**

# 2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

SB 2234  
1/26/2023

A BILL for an act to provide an appropriation to the adjutant general for architecture and engineering costs for a new national guard training center
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2:27 PM Chairman Luick called the committee to order. Senators Weston, Weber, Luick, Myrdal, and Lemm are present. Senator Hogan was absent.

### Discussion Topics:

- National guard armory

2:28 PM Senator Beard, District 23, introduced the bill and testified in favor #16976.

2:31 PM Al Dohrmann, Adjutant General, North Dakota National Guard, testified neutral #17120.

2:41 PM Senator Myrdal moved DO NOT PASS SB 2234.

2:41 PM Senator Weber seconded DO NOT PASS SB 2234.

2:42 PM Roll Call Vote DO NOT PASS SB 2234.

Roll Call Vote – DO NOT PASS SB 2134.

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	A
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

2:42 PM Chairman Luick left the vote open to wait for the return of Senator Hogan.

2:43 PM Senator Hogan returned to vote.

2:45 PM Roll Call Vote – DO NOT PASS SB 2134.

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Motion Passed 6-0-0 DO NOT PASS SB 2134. Senator Myrdal to carry.

Howard Klug, President, Williston Board of City Commissioners, testified in favor #17152.

2:45 PM Chairman Luick closed the hearing on SB 2234.

*Dave Owen, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2234: Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee (Sen. Luick, Chairman)** recommends **DO NOT PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2234 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

**TESTIMONY**

**SB 2234**

Members of the committee. My name is Todd Beard, Senator from Williston District 23. I am here to speak on SB 2234.

This is a funding bill I am putting forward on behalf of the ND National Guard. The National Guard has a long history and presence in the Williston area. They have supported missions throughout our state's history, around the world as well as within our state. From Iraq to the flooding in Minot they have been there providing services to support and protect. The 818th engineering unit has been replaced by the 188 Air Defense Artillery Unit. New team, new mission. Currently the ND National Guard leases a space with the City of Williston for the purpose of equipment storage. The time has come for a new armory to be built in the Williston area. This will be a training and support facility for 63 soldiers with 3 full time staff within the city of Williston. The property has been secured, now they need funding to get the ball rolling for the planning and preparation for the construction phase.

The bill before you would provide the necessary funding to get that ball rolling. The \$2,600,000 ask in this bill would do just that.

I ask that we support our ND National Guard with a Do Pass vote and will try to answer any questions you may have.

Thank You

Senator Todd Beard

TESTIMONY OF  
MAJOR GENERAL ALAN S. DOHRMANN  
NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD  
BEFORE THE  
SENATE AGRICULTURE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS  
26 JANUARY 2023  
SENATE BILL 2234

Chairman Luick and members of the committee, I am Al Dohrmann, Adjutant General for the North Dakota National Guard (NDNG). I am here today to provide testimony for Senate Bill 2234, which proposes \$2.6M of funding to the National Guard for design and architecture costs for armory construction in Williston, North Dakota.

While a new Armory has been part of our facilities master plan since 2015, I'm testifying in a neutral position today.

First, this funding is not in the Governor budget recommendation which my agency fully supports. We were part of the Governor's strategic review process and appreciate the effort of the Governor and his advisors to balance competing priorities. As an agency, we understand our requirements need to be weighed against other needs in state government. Finding a federal or state solution for a new armory in Williston remains a priority, but not the immediate need in the next biennium.

Second, it may be premature to construct a new Armory in Williston. Currently we have a minimal presence in Williston. We received a Department of the Army deactivation order for the engineer company that was assigned there. At that time, we decided that it was critical that we maintain a presence in northwest North Dakota. After extensive staff analysis, I approved the re-location of an Air Defense unit of 63 soldiers from Bismarck to Williston. This move will occur this summer.

This Air Defense unit will move into a facility recently renovated by the city of Williston. This rental facility is adequate for the unit's training requirements in the short-term. As the unit settles into the facility, we will continue to assess future requirements, including the construction of a new Armory. Allowing time for the unit to come up to full operational capability will put us in a better position to assess and address this emerging requirement in the 69<sup>th</sup> Legislative session. We always leverage federal military construction dollars but know that a federal solution in Williston may be decades out.

With that said, I need to recognize Williston and Williams County for their support and contributions to the North Dakota National Guard. They have been incredible partners. Not only did they provide and renovate a new rental facility for our Air Defense unit, but they also designated land for a new National Guard Armory adjacent to the new High School. The value of the land and infrastructure is estimated in excess of \$6,000,000. We truly appreciate all the communities that support our National Guard units, but Williston truly goes above and beyond.

If SB 2234 is approved and a future funding solution for construction is identified a new Williston Armory would be considered a shovel ready project.

I will stand by for any questions that you may have.



January 25, 2023

Senator Larry Luick, Chairman  
Agriculture and Veterans Affairs  
600 E. Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

RE: SB 2234

Chairman Luick and Members of the Committee,

As the Mayor representing the City of Williston and its 30,000 plus residents, it gives me great pleasure to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 2234.

The Army National Guard Training Center and the 818 Engineers have long been a staple in the Williston community. With an annual economic impact of more than 1.4 million dollars we have always shown support for their presence.

Although we are saddened to see the 818 transition out, we remain enthusiastic to what lies ahead with the addition of the new Air Defense Unit. We can assure you our community support remains intact.

With a proposed August timeline for the Air Defense Unit to begin drilling in Williston, we realized the need for transitional space until a new facility can be constructed. Therefore, we have created an agreement with the guard to utilize space within an existing city structure. I am confident the bill sponsor and District 23 Senator Todd Beard has touched on some of these details during his testimony. Although our agreement may meet the temporary needs for this unit, the need for a permanent facility remains.

I strongly ask for your support on Senate Bill 2234.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Howard Klug", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Howard Klug, President  
Board of City Commissioners