

North Dakota League of Cities – Resolutions - 2021

Continuing Resolutions

A. Mandates on Local Governments

Whereas, Congress and the state legislature place mandates on local governments; and

Whereas, these mandates often place a financial burden on local governments, many times in the middle of a budget year; and

Whereas, the cost of mandated programs and services should be paid for by those developing the programs and services;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall strive to have state and federal mandates paid for by the state or federal government and to delay the effective date of mandates that are not paid for until the start of the next budget year.

B. Economic Development and Economic Diversity

Whereas, it is vital to the future of cities of all sizes in North Dakota that new economic growth be stimulated and economies be diversified throughout the state so that more jobs are available; and

Whereas, a stronger partnership between cities and the state needs to be promoted so North Dakota does not lose its most valuable resource - its people; and

Whereas, cities and the state need to cooperate to promote areas of job growth such as the development of more value-added products;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall support changes to promote new economic growth and diversification of economies, including changes to make the state more competitive with other states, to bring about speedier consideration of prospects for development, and to provide venture capital for economic development projects;

C. Progressive State Regulations

Whereas, city economic development investments should be made in a way that provides citizens with the best return on investment possible; and

Whereas, state regulations determine how city economic development investments can be made; and

Whereas, progressive state regulations can help cities make economic development investments that will provide citizens with the greatest return on their investments;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports progressive state regulations that help increase cities' return on economic development investments.

D. Regulatory Environment

Whereas, the collection and disposal of solid waste, water treatment and distribution, and wastewater and storm water treatment are important functions of city government; and

Whereas, state and federal governments place many regulations on these activities; and

Whereas, such regulations can place a heavy financial burden on city governments;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall ensure the perspectives of city officials are considered in setting fees and developing any regulations at the federal and state level.

E. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Whereas, cities and other levels of government are faced with the problem of meeting growing demands for services on limited budgets; and

Whereas, state law authorizes joint powers agreements and other tools to restructure local government for effectiveness and efficiency; and

Whereas, these tools can be used by cities and other levels of government to work together to provide needed services to their citizens in the most effective manner;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall support programs and activities that will promote and support intergovernmental cooperation.

F. Local Authority

Whereas, there has been an erosion of local governing authority because of actions taken at the state and federal government levels; and

Whereas, local governing board members are elected by the same citizens that elect the state and federal elected officials; and

Whereas, local government is closest to the people and in the best position to act on many matters of importance to all citizens;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall work to ensure that local governing authority is preserved to the greatest extent possible.

G. Home Rule Authority

Whereas, state legislative actions and court decisions have limited home rule authority; and

Whereas, the authority of home rule cities has been approved by local voters in home rule charters; and

Whereas, the ability of local voters to determine local authority should be maintained;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports the ability of local voters to approve local authority and opposes legislative action that would limit home rule authority.

H. State Preemption

Whereas, state preemption can be used to nullify a local ordinance approved by the governing body or citizens of a North Dakota city; and

Whereas, state preemption negatively effects the ability of a city to govern itself; and

Whereas, state preemption disallows a city to govern itself; and

Whereas, state preemption does not allow local leaders to create policies and programs that help communities prosper;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities will work to defeat any attempts to control cities' self-governing rights through state preemption.

I. Organizational Goals

Whereas, the North Dakota League of Cities works to represent the interests of cities in North Dakota; and

Whereas, other levels of government are represented by their own membership organizations; and

Whereas, many of these organizations have goals that are shared by the North Dakota League of Cities;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall strive to work together with organizations representing other levels of government to meet the common goals of all members.

J. Work Force Development, Attraction, and Retention

Whereas, a well-trained workforce is vital to maintaining the health of North Dakota's economy; and

Whereas, education and training through school or on-the-job training beyond high school is necessary for a well-trained workforce; and

Whereas, cooperation between local government, educational institutions, and employers is integral to building, attracting and retaining a well-trained workforce;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall endeavor to build relationships with educational institutions and employers to build, attract and retain a strong, well-trained workforce in North Dakota.

K. Affordable Housing

Whereas, having affordable housing available to all individuals is vital to a healthy community; and

Whereas, a shortage of affordable housing options exists in many North Dakota cities; and

Whereas, city participation is vital to increasing the availability of affordable housing in cities;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities will support existing programs to create affordable housing and seek creative solutions to increasing availability of affordable housing.

Resolutions for Consideration - 2021

2021-1. Property and Sales Tax Exemptions

Whereas, property and sales tax are important sources of revenue for cities and other political subdivisions; and

Whereas, property and sales tax exemptions impair the amount of revenue available to local governments; and

Whereas, appropriate funding of cities and other political subdivisions is essential to providing the best service to citizens;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities opposes any effort to create additional property and sales tax exemptions.

2021-2. Addiction Issues.

Whereas, North Dakota communities are being negatively affected by drug and alcohol addiction; and

Whereas, it has also been shown that drug and alcohol addiction have a devastating effect on its users; and

Whereas, cities need to be part of the solution in solving drug and alcohol addiction issues;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports efforts to promote community responses to drug and alcohol addiction issues.

2021-3. Economic Development Tools

Whereas, the North Dakota Century Code provides several economic development tools for cities to use to stimulate economic development within the city; and

Whereas, those tools include Renaissance Zones, tax increment financing, and payments in lieu of property taxes; and

Whereas, maintaining the ability of cities to utilize these economic development tools is important to cities being able to promote economic development within cities;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports maintaining cities' ability to use these economic development tools and gathering the data to show the positive impact these economic development tools have within cities.

2021-4. Support of Main Street Initiative

Whereas, the Main Street Initiative encourages utilizing a city's current infrastructure to its fullest potential and revitalizing cities' downtowns and main streets; and

Whereas, efficient use of current infrastructure can reduce the cost of local government; and

Whereas, repurposing buildings in cities' downtowns and on their main streets can help attract the skilled workforce that employers are looking for;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports the Main Street Initiative.

2021-5. Special Assessments

Whereas, special assessments are a vital tool for paying for infrastructure; and

Whereas, citizens count on cities to maintain existing infrastructure; and

Whereas, some developers need to have special assessments available in order to make new housing developments affordable;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports maintaining cities' ability to use special assessments as the governing body determines best fits each individual city's need.

2021-6. Extra Territorial Zoning Jurisdiction

Whereas, uniform planning in the area surrounding a city is vital to a city's continued growth; and

Whereas, the cost of providing city services to areas annexed into the city increases when development has not occurred in a pattern that matches city development; and

Whereas, city extra territorial zoning jurisdiction provides cities the ability to ensure orderly development near the city border;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports maintaining city extra territorial zoning jurisdiction in its current form.

2021-7. Small Cell Wireless Siting

Whereas, across the United States wireless network companies are working to install equipment to support their wireless networks on city owned infrastructure and in city owned rights-of-way; and

Whereas, legislation has been introduced in other states seeking to preempt municipal authority with regard to compensation and placement of such equipment; and

Whereas, cities have a duty to protect and maintain their public infrastructure and right-of-way;

Now, therefore, be it resolved the North Dakota League of Cities opposes limiting city authority regarding small cell wireless siting.

2021-8. Water Funding

Whereas, a potable and a reliable water source is crucial to a healthy community; and

Whereas, many cities have water projects that need to be completed in order to provide potable and reliable water to its city residents; and

Whereas, state funding is vital to allowing cities to complete these projects;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports state funding of municipal water projects and maintaining the 60% state and 40% local cost-share.

2021-9. Veterans and Members of the United States Armed Forces

Whereas, our citizens enjoy many freedoms and opportunities; and

Whereas, these freedoms and opportunities are available because of the service and sacrifice of our veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces; and

Whereas, this service and sacrifice may often go unrecognized;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities expresses its gratitude, appreciation, and respect for the service and sacrifice of the veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces.

2021-10. North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS)

Whereas, NDPERS provides a defined benefit retirement plan that many cities participate in;

Whereas, the defined benefit retirement plan provides cities a tool to help recruit and retain employees;

Whereas, cities benefit from having access to recruiting and retaining the best employees;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities opposes requiring cities participating in the NDPERS retirement system to change from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan.

2021-11. Resolution of Appreciation

Whereas, the city of Bismarck, through its officials and employees, have planned to help make this a successful annual conference; and

Whereas, the facilities provided at the Bismarck Event Center, were excellent; and

Whereas, the people of Bismarck have extended their hospitality to all city officials attending;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities, meeting in a business session this 18th day of September, 2021, conveys its appreciation to the city of Bismarck, and all those involved for helping to make this an excellent annual conference.