



Representative Roy Klopfenstein

82nd House District

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, we appreciate the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 430.

As evident in numerous public service roles, the task of filling the county engineer position has become increasingly challenging. In my home county, once our current engineer steps down, there is likely only one other individual within the county willing to step up. This issue extends beyond my community, as I'm certain many others are experiencing similar difficulties. The proposed legislation presents a dual-pronged solution to address this pressing matter. Firstly, it aims to promote fairness by eliminating pay disparities for engineers who also operate a private practice. Secondly, it grants county commissioners the authority to contract with engineers from neighboring counties to temporarily fill vacant positions in the county engineer's office if they cannot be filled through election or appointment.

It is important to note that this legislation mirrors similar provisions that exist in current law for county coroners, which has proven invaluable when they have been unable to find someone to fill a vacant office. The key distinction is that, to prevent counties from simply opting for the most economical option, the legislation stipulates that the county with the vacancy must compensate the contracted engineer at the same rate as they would their own engineer.

I respectfully ask for your support of this legislation. Thank you all for your time and I will pass things over to my joint sponsor Representative Rogers.