

## Term Limits Case In ND Builds On Active Year For Civic Engagement

By Mike Moen,  
Prairie News Service

This spring, the North Dakota Supreme Court will take up a closely-watched issue: term limits for state lawmakers. A public policy group sees the debate as another avenue for residents to reengage with civic matters.

The pending case stems from a 2022 ballot initiative approved by voters, imposing legislative term limits. The Republican-led legislature later approved placing a new question on this year's statewide ballot calling for a less restrictive approach in capping the years state lawmakers can serve. It led to a lawsuit now before the state's high court, challenging the push for new changes.

Amy Jacobson, executive director of Prairie Action ND, said her group doesn't have a stance on term limits but the case is worth monitoring.

"It is concerning when the will of the people is being usurped by the elected politicians," Jacobson continued.

Lawmakers behind the new effort said there needs to be a smoother transition for term limits. Jacobson acknowledged it is reasonable to think voters feel shut out or turned

off by today's political environment but added as people struggle with things like higher consumer prices, they might be more open to staying on top of developments like the case.

There are two other statewide ballot questions this year put forward by the legislature which would update rules for future citizen-initiated measures. Jacobson pointed out even though it is an off year for presidential elections, North Dakota voters could be motivated to learn more about what is at stake and vote on them. Based on her group's feedback, she noted the quality-of-life concerns appear to make policy debates seem less abstract to the typical voter.

"Now it's become very personal," Jacobson stressed. "I think that's why we're seeing more engagement by individuals."

Jacobson is helping lead an effort to get a separate question on this year's ballot which would guarantee free school meals to all K-12 students in North Dakota, regardless of their family's household income. A 2025 survey from the National Civic League found many Americans feel disconnected from local decision-making, but they remain eager to find ways to participate.

## ND Department Of Commerce Opens Additional Funding Round For Destination Development Grants

The North Dakota Department of Commerce announced the opening of an additional funding round for the Destination Development Grant (DDG) program, making \$4 million available to advance tourism projects across the state.

The funds, originally allocated to ND Country Fest for venue expansion in New Salem, have been reallocated after the applicant chose not to proceed with the project.

Applications are now open and will be accepted by 5 p.m. CST March 10, 2026. All submissions must be completed online; email or mail submissions will not be accepted.

The DDG program supports the development or expansion of attractions that attract new visitors to North Dakota which strengthens North Dakota's economy. These new experiences and amenities also enhance the quality of life for residents. Eligible applicants include for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations and tourism-related entities. State and federal government entities and previous DDG recipients from the 2023-25 or 2025-27 rounds are not eligible. Previous non-awarded applicants are encouraged to apply.

agreed to reapply using a streamlined application designed for ease and efficiency.

### Matching requirements:

- 1-to-1 match required (cash or in-kind contributions)
- Cash match reimbursement: Fifty percent of approved invoices after verification under the grant agreement.
- In-kind contributions may include:
  - o Documented value of donated land or facilities
  - o Materials and equipment
  - o Eligible in-house labor (excluding administrative or programmatic costs)

Competitive proposals will demonstrate how projects will attract new visitors to North Dakota, align with the state's identity, including realistic timelines for completion within the 2025-27 biennium and deliver long-term community impact. Grant awards will be announced April 30, 2026.

For more information and to apply, visit <https://ndgov.link/DestinationDevelopment>. For more North Dakota news and information, go to [www.NDCommerce.com](http://www.NDCommerce.com).

## Prairie Fare: Stand By Your Pan, Avoiding Kitchen Fires

By Julie Garden-Robinson,  
Food and Nutrition Specialist,  
NDSU Extension

"I need to check something in the kitchen," a colleague said. She was working from home.

"I hear the smoke alarm," she added quickly before turning off her Zoom camera and microphone.

She sounded remarkably calm. I would have bolted from the room. And I probably would have forgotten to mute my microphone.

Several minutes later, she returned online. Her young children had started a fire in the kitchen. Apparently, they attempted to "toast" a coffee filter.

"I put the fire out, but my countertop is damaged," she said. I'm guessing she also moved her kids out of the kitchen.

Fortunately, no one was injured. Fires can start remarkably fast and may damage property or even cause loss of life.

I can relate. I once put garlic toast under the broiler and ran to the base-ment to grab something. A couple of minutes later, I returned to find edible charcoal. I narrowly avoided setting off the smoke alarm.

I knew better than that. My kids learned from my bad example and still remember the smoking garlic bread to this day.

Cooking is a leading cause of home fires. Most of us have heard stories of homes going up in flames after someone left a pan on the burner and fell asleep on the couch. That's why the U.S. Fire Adminis-tration urges us to "stand by your pan." In other words, stay in the kitchen when cooking, especially when using the stovetop.

Let's try a quick quiz based on a two-year period reported by fire departments in 2019:

How many fires in residential buildings were reported in the U.S.?

- a) 97,700
- b) 147,400
- c) 187,500

How many injuries occurred in these residential fires?

- a) 1,340
- b) 3,325
- c) 5,210

What was the total property loss?

- a) \$444 million
- b) \$755 million
- c) \$982 million

The answers are c) 187,500 cooking fires, b) 3,325 injuries and a)

\$444 million in property losses. In fact, cooking accounted for fifty-one percent of all building fires in the U.S. during the 2017-2019 period for which statistics are available.

So, what's a savvy cook to do? Use common sense and stay alert. Ranges are involved in more than half of kitchen fires, and unattended equipment is linked to one in four home cooking fires.

### Fire-Smart Kitchen Tips

- Stay in or very near the kitchen while cooking. Check food often.
- Turn off the burner if you leave the kitchen.

• Avoid frying on high heat. If oil begins to smoke, cover and remove from the burner.

• Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.

• Keep a lid or baking sheet nearby to smother flames.

• Keep flammable items (oven mitts, towels, wooden utensils and food packaging) away from the stovetop.

• Make sure clothing, including long sleeves and aprons, stays clear of burners.

• Supervise children in the kitchen at all times.

• If you help care for an older adult living independently, review kitchen safety precautions together.

• Test smoke alarms regularly. If someone has a hearing impairment, use alarms with strobe lights or other alert systems.

• Keep a working fire extinguisher on hand and know how to use it.

• Have an escape plan in case of fire.

This spreadable roasted garlic recipe avoids the broiler, but I still stay close to the kitchen. It's delicious on whole-grain crackers or fresh bread. For more garlic recipes, visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/fieldtofork](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/fieldtofork).

### Roasted Garlic Spread

- 7 medium heads garlic
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Preheat oven to 400 F (200 C).

Arrange garlic heads in muffin cups sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Drizzle with olive oil. Bake for 40 minutes to 1 hour until garlic is soft and squeezable. Cool slightly and serve on crackers or bread. Refrigerate leftovers.

Makes 10 servings. Each serving provides 30 calories, 1 gram (g) carbohydrate, 3 g fat, 0 g fiber, and 0 milligrams sodium.

## Exhibitors Must Follow Regulations When Bringing Project Animals Into North Dakota

While the groundhog has forecast six more weeks of winter, livestock exhibitors around the state are looking forward to the summer show season. In early 2026, many exhibitors will attend show animal sales in other states, searching for an animal to bring home the blue ribbon.

The North Dakota State Board of Animal Health and North Dakota State University Extension have issued a reminder to buyers that show animals purchased out of North Dakota require a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI) to enter the state.

"A CVI documents that the animal is free of signs of infectious, contagious disease and has met the health requirements set by the State Board of Animal Health for import into North Dakota," says Dr. Jake Galbreath, NDSU Extension veterinarian. "A veterinarian that is licensed and accredited in the state the animal is coming from must perform an evaluation and any required testing, and they must ensure the animal meets requirements for individual identification before entering North Dakota."

Dr. Galbreath explains that this documentation is important because it allows the state veterinary office to trace animals in the event of a disease outbreak, which can be key to limiting the spread of illness. An outbreak of equine herpesvirus (EHV-1) associated with rodeo events in Texas and Oklahoma in late 2025 demonstrated how proper documentation can help quickly identify animals that may have been exposed and allow officials to contact owners with response instructions.

At livestock check-ins at the 2025 North Dakota State Fair, state veterinary officials identified 187 animals from eighty families and three third-party importers that originated outside North Dakota that had no CVI to document when they entered the state.

For information on requirements to transport animals into North Dakota, visit <https://www.ndda.nd.gov/divisions/animal-health/animal-movement-and-importation-requirements> or call the state board at 701-328-2655.

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