

Good morning Chairman Keiser and members of the Committee. My name is Mylynn Tufte, MBA, MSIM, RN, and I am the State Health Officer. As the lead official for the North Dakota Department of Health, I am here to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1063.

The opioid epidemic that has gripped the Nation has been felt here in North Dakota. Many families have been personally impacted by the disease of addiction. In North Dakota, the number of prescription drug overdose deaths has increased from 20 in 2013 to 77 in 2016.¹ Prescription opioid misuse and overdose is an evergrowing concern for ND communities. In the 2017, ND Community Readiness Survey, ND adults reported that they believe prescription drug use among both youth (84.8%) and adults (84.2%) is a problem in their community.²

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published prescribing guidelines that are in line with this legislation and have been adopted by several other states, health plans and pharmacy benefit managers specifically, that opioid therapy not to exceed 90 morphine milligram equivalents of opioid medication per day or more than a seven-day supply with certain populations being excluded.³

While we recognize there have been changes in prescribing practices by our clinicians and an increased awareness by citizens about the dangers associated with prescription drugs, that has not yet resulted in a significant decrease in the number of controlled prescriptions dispensed 2017 (1,299,599) up 10.6% from 2010 (1,175,532).⁴

Passage of HB 1063, can help prevent injured workers from becoming addicted to prescription pain killers or possibly even save a life. For this reason, we ask for your support.

¹ Center for Disease Control (CDC) Wonder, 2016

² <https://prevention.nd.gov/files/pdf/DataBook2019.pdf>

³ Dowell D, Haegerich TM, Chou R. CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain — United States, 2016. MMWR Recomm Rep 2016;65(No. RR-1):1–49. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.rr6501e1>

⁴ ND Board of Pharmacy, PDMP Report 2017 Q4