

Testimony  
*To the*  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
*On*  
**HB 1247**

Good morning Chairman Lee and members of the committee. I am Lisa Clute, Executive Officer of First District Health Unit. First District provides local public health services to Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, McLean, Renville, Sheridan and Ward counties.

I am neutral on this Bill. However, I am hopeful that the discussions regarding this Bill will address increased communication and partnership with local public health units, respect local autonomy and decision making, and recognize the importance of grass roots coordination to address public health issues. Local Public Health agencies know our communities and how to best coordinate local efforts. We are trusted and known partners in our communities. Coordination amongst State Departments and Divisions within the Departments can be challenging because of the silos they function in. Increased coordination amongst the various State offices would be beneficial in addressing public health issues and in emergency situations.

I would anticipate that there will be several challenges if this Bill moves forward and it may be important to take the time to do it effectively with input from several organizations. Community members are the end recipients of work done by Department of Human Services and Department of Health and may have valuable input into these discussions.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.