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Senate Judiciary Committee
House Bill 1263 - April 2, 2025 Testimony of
Brad Peterson, P&A Legal Director

Greetings Chair Larson and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Brad Peterson and I'm the Legal Director at the North Dakota Protection and Advocacy Project (P&A). P&A is an independent state agency established in 1977 to assert and advance the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities. The agency's programs and services seek to make positive changes for people with disabilities where we live, learn, work and play.

P&A supports HB 1263. P&A also supports at lines 10 and 11 the removal of the presumption requiring a person seeking to seal a record to show 'the benefit to the petitioner outweighs the presumption of openness of the criminal record'. The presumption has the unintended consequence of requiring a person who has successfully completed the rehabilitation process to have their criminal record follow them into the work force and daily living. By removing the presumption, it would allow the rehabilitated person a better opportunity for success in their endeavors and in the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brad Peterson
Legal Director

