

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1558.

Good afternoon, Madam Chair Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

For the record my name is Jesse Jahner, and I am the elected Sheriff in Cass County North Dakota currently serving in my second year of my second term. I have worked with the Cass County Sheriff's Office since May of 1998. During my time at the Sheriff's Office, I have worked in Corrections, Patrol, Investigations, Narcotics Investigations, Street Crime Investigations and in Special Operations. I have served as the Dakota Territories (North and South Dakota) Sheriff's Association President and currently serve as a National Sheriff's Association Board Member.

I write testimony today in favor of House Bill (HB) 1558. HB 1558 will require a defendant found guilty of criminal vehicular homicide to pay restitution in the form of child support to a surviving spouse or other relatives who are raising the children of impaired driving victims until they turn 18. Six states have already enacted similar legislation that is often referred to as Bentley's Law. The law allows for due process in determining the restitution amount and considers many factors which I believe are relevant to a situation where a child has lost their parent or legal guardian. These types of situations can most certainly damage families not only emotionally but also financially. Because of a poor decision making to drive intoxicated a child should not be left to struggle financially as they move forward in life without having a parent or guardian there to provide for them.

I also believe HB 1558 will help in the way of deterrence to those who tend to drive intoxicated. There are no excuses in my opinion for someone to drive intoxicated when we have several safe ride options such as taxi's, Uber, and ride sharing options. This law will hopefully look to promote good decision making when it comes to drinking and driving.

I urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to recommend a do pass on HB 1558. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Jesse Jahner
Cass County Sheriff