

**SENATE BILL NO. 2335**

Introduced by

Senators Heckaman, D. Larson, J. Lee, Unruh

Representative Weisz

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact subsection 7 of section 6-08.1-03, sections 12.1-31-07,  
2 12.1-31-07.1, and 12.1-31-07.2, and subdivision f of subsection 1 of section 19-03.1-22.2 of the  
3 North Dakota Century Code, relating to the definition and endangerment or exploitation of ~~a~~  
4 ~~vulnerable~~an eligible adult; and to provide a penalty.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 7 of section 6-08.1-03 of the North Dakota Century  
7 Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

8 7. For purposes of reporting suspected exploitation of ~~a disabled adult or vulnerable~~  
9 ~~elderly~~an eligible adult as defined by section 12.1-31-07. Nothing in this subsection  
10 may be construed to impose upon a financial institution a duty to investigate an  
11 alleged or suspected exploitation of ~~a disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~an eligible  
12 adult or to make ~~any~~a report to a governmental agency or law enforcement agency.

13 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 12.1-31-07 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
14 amended and reenacted as follows:

15 **12.1-31-07. Endangering ~~a vulnerable~~an eligible adult - Penalty.**

16 1. In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

17 a. "Caregiver" means a person who is responsible for the care of ~~a disabled adult or~~  
18 ~~vulnerable elderly~~an eligible adult as a result of a familial or legal relationship, or  
19 a person who has assumed responsibility for the care of ~~a disabled adult or~~  
20 ~~vulnerable elderly~~an eligible adult. The term does not include a licensed health  
21 care provider who is acting within the provider's legal scope of practice in  
22 providing appropriate care or assistance to ~~a disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~  
23 an eligible adult who is the patient or client of the licensed health care provider.

1           b. ~~"Disabled adult" means a person eighteen years of age or older who suffers from~~  
2           ~~a condition of physical or mental incapacitation due to a developmental disability~~  
3           ~~or organic brain damage or mental illness or who has one or more physical or~~  
4           ~~mental limitations that restrict the person's ability to perform the normal activities~~  
5           ~~of daily living.~~

6           e. ~~"Vulnerable elderly adult" means a person sixty years of age or older who is~~  
7           ~~suffering from a disease or infirmity associated with advanced age and~~  
8           ~~manifested by physical, mental, or emotional dysfunctioning to the extent that the~~  
9           ~~person is incapable of adequately providing for the person's own health or~~  
10          ~~personal care.~~

11          "Vulnerable adult" means:

12          ~~(1) An individual who is at least sixty years of age; or~~

13          ~~(2) An individual eighteen years of age or older who suffers from a condition of~~  
14          ~~physical or mental incapacitation due to disease, developmental disability,~~  
15          ~~organic brain damage, mental illness, or who has a physical or mental~~  
16          ~~limitation restricting the individual's ability to perform the normal activities of~~  
17          ~~daily living.~~

18          "Eligible adult" means an individual who is at least sixty years old or a vulnerable  
19          adult as defined in section 50-25.2-01.

20          c. "Undue influence" means the use of a position of trust and confidence with an  
21          eligible adult to exploit or take advantage of that eligible adult through actions or  
22          tactics, including emotional, psychological, or legal manipulation.

23          2. Except as provided for by chapters 23-06.5 and 30.1-30, a caregiver who knowingly  
24          performs an act that causes ~~a disabled adult's or vulnerable elderly~~an eligible adult's  
25          life to be endangered, health to be injured, or pre-existing physical or mental condition  
26          to deteriorate, or a caregiver who fails to perform acts that the caregiver knows are  
27          necessary to maintain or preserve the life or health of the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable~~  
28          ~~elderly~~eligible adult and the failure causes the ~~disabled adult's or vulnerable elderly~~  
29          eligible adult's life to be endangered, health to be injured, or pre-existing physical or  
30          mental condition to deteriorate, is guilty of a class B felony.

1       **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 12.1-31-07.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
2 amended and reenacted as follows:

3       **12.1-31-07.1. Exploitation of ~~a vulnerable~~an eligible adult - Penalty.**

4       1. A person is guilty of exploitation of ~~a disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~an eligible  
5 adult if:

6       a. The person stands in a position of trust and confidence or has a business  
7 relationship with the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult and  
8 knowingly, by deception ~~or~~, intimidation, or undue influence, obtains or uses, or  
9 attempts to obtain or use, the ~~disabled adult's or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult's  
10 funds, assets, or property with the intent to temporarily or permanently deprive  
11 the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult of the use, benefit, or  
12 possession of the property, for the benefit of someone other than the ~~disabled~~  
13 ~~adult or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult; or

14       b. The person knows that the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult lacks  
15 the capacity to consent, and obtains or uses, or attempts to obtain or use, or  
16 assists another in obtaining or using or attempting to obtain or use, the ~~disabled~~  
17 ~~adult's or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult's funds, assets, or property with the  
18 intent to temporarily or permanently deprive the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable~~  
19 ~~elderly~~eligible adult of the use, benefit, or possession of the property for the  
20 benefit of someone other than the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~eligible  
21 adult.

22       2. Exploitation of ~~a disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~an eligible adult is:

23       a. A class A felony if the value of the exploited funds, assets, or property exceeds  
24 fifty thousand dollars.

25       b. A class B felony if the value of the exploited funds, assets, or property exceeds  
26 ten thousand dollars but does not exceed fifty thousand dollars.

27       c. A class C felony if the value of the exploited funds, assets, or property is in  
28 excess of one thousand dollars but does not exceed ten thousand dollars.

29       d. A class A misdemeanor if the value of the exploited funds, assets, or property  
30 does not exceed one thousand dollars.

1           3. It is not a defense to a prosecution of a violation of this section that the accused did  
2           not know the age of the victim.

3           4. This section does not impose criminal liability on a person who has:

4           a. Managed the ~~disabled adult's or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult's funds, assets,  
5           or property in a manner that clearly gives primacy to the needs and welfare of  
6           that person or is consistent with any explicit written authorization; or

7           b. Made a good-faith effort to assist in the management of the ~~disabled adult's or~~  
8           vulnerable elderlyeligible adult's funds, assets, or property.

9           **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 12.1-31-07.2 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
10          amended and reenacted as follows:

11          **12.1-31-07.2. Criminal proceeding involving a ~~vulnerable~~an eligible adult - Speedy**  
12          **trial.**

13          In a criminal proceeding in which a ~~disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~an eligible adult is a  
14          victim, the court and state's attorney shall take appropriate action to ensure a speedy trial to  
15          minimize the length of time the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~eligible adult must endure the  
16          stress of involvement in the proceedings. In ruling on ~~any~~a motion or other request for a delay  
17          or a continuance of proceedings, the court shall consider and give weight to any adverse impact  
18          the delay or continuance may have on the well-being of the ~~disabled adult or vulnerable~~  
19          elderlyeligible adult.

20          **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Subdivision f of subsection 1 of section 19-03.1-22.2 of the  
21          North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

22          f. "Vulnerable adult" means either a ~~disabled adult or vulnerable elderly~~ adult as  
23          these terms are the term is defined in section ~~12.1-31-07~~50-25.2-01.