

HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES
ROBIN WEISZ, CHAIRMAN JANUARY 19, 2021

TESTIMONY BY
ALEXIS WANGLER
RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1299

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Human Services, my name is Alexis Wangler. This is my written testimony in regard to House Concurrent Resolution No. 3007.

I am strongly in favor of this resolution. The definition of emergency as defined by Merriam-Webster is “an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action” or “an urgent need for assistance or relief.” As I’m sure you are all well aware, North Dakota has been in a state of emergency since March 13th, 2020. That is 312 days. 312 days is not emergent.

The goal of the state of emergency was to lower the curve. We didn’t want to overrun our hospitals and clinics. That has been accomplished. Months ago, North Dakota Lt. Governor Sanford said that only about 10-20% of patients in hospitals and clinics were Covid patients.

According to Toby Rogers, a world economist, even 1% unemployment rate increased deaths by 36,000. In November of 2020, North Dakota’s unemployment rate was 4.1%. This was 2.1 percentage points higher than November 2019. People are suffering. Deaths of despair have gone through the roof. People have been taking their own lives now more than ever before. Overdoses have increased. Domestic violence has increased. Livelihoods are suffering. In just Fargo alone, 30 establishments went out of business this year. These establishments were restaurants, breweries, hotels, and childcare centers. What are parents going to do when they don’t have access to childcare which is already hard to come by? These are major issues that do not have to occur anymore.

We have already reached herd immunity. According to Dr. Harvey Risch, “The CDC has said for all the cases that have been registered, identified, there’s approximately six-fold more people in the population who have actually been infected and most of them are asymptomatic. This means for states like North Dakota and South Dakota, which have 100 to 115,000 cases per million already registered, they are approaching herd immunity.” In addition, there is evidence that we all have something called cross-reactive T cell immunity. Basically, since the virus strain is similar to those we have already been exposed to, we are already partly immune to this new strain.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this resolution.