

HOUSE BILL NO. 1034

January 13, 2021

9:00 a.m.

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

My name is Gregory Ian Runge. I am an attorney here in the Bismarck/Mandan area. I have been practicing law for little more than thirty years and have been practicing mental health under Section 25-03.1 of the North Dakota Century Code for that same amount of time, as well.

During this period of time I have represented, on average fifteen to twenty-five individuals a month on involuntary commitments.

I come here to speak in favor of House Bill No. 1034. As you can see, most of Bill No. 1034 pertains to changes in terminology. These changes are to have the statute come into agreement with the terminology of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 5)(the bible of the psychiatric profession).

So as you can see on page 2, lines 6-7, line 16, line 29; page 5, lines 14-17; page 7, lines 12-13; page 8, lines 8-9; all have changes

from the term “Chemical dependency,” to “substance use disorder.”

Next, for sometime now, it has been a problem in getting the Report of Examination (F-2) and the Report Assessing Availability and Appropriateness of Alternative Treatment (F-2A) in a timely manner, that is, in time to discuss these reports with the respondent and to prepare for court. In the past, I have been handed these documents as I passed the Clerk of Court’s office on my way into the courtroom.

I can only believe that this may also be a problem in other parts of the state, as well. To this end, page 3 Lines 19-21 and page 4, lines 23-25 seems to be the best solution to this problem.

If you have any question, I’ll be happy to answer them.

Gregory Ian Runge
Attorney at Law
Attorney for the Respondent