

House Political Science Committee
HB 1435
Megan Houn, BCBSND
January 28, 2021

Good afternoon Chairman Dockter and members of the Political Subdivisions Committee, I am Megan Houn, Director of Government Relations at BCBSND. On behalf of BCBSND, I want to extend our gratitude for all who serve so honorably and extend our deepest sympathies to the families who have tragically lost a loved one in the line of duty.

We commend the sponsors for supporting continuation of health insurance coverage for the spouse and dependents of an employee who dies in the line of duty, however, this bill raises concerns among a number of employer groups that BCBSND represents as a third party administrator:

- It's uncertain if NDPER's is included, raising concerns about the inconsistent application across governmental entities.
- Financial impacts on the budgets of political subdivisions.
- Retroactive provision included in Section 6.

As an alternative approach, we support the creation of a fund at the State level which will provide health coverage for families impacted by the tragedy of line-of-duty deaths. This approach would provide critical support for these families, reduce the impact on political subdivisions who could be challenged by the added costs, and establish a consistent and reliable fund to support the loved ones of those who have served so honorably. Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.

Regards, Megan Houn