

Madam Chairperson and members of the committee, my name is Angela Kritzberger and I am from Hillsboro. I am here today with our daughter Nina to ask for your support of SB2183 which provides a cap of \$25 for insulin and basic diabetes supplies.

Nearly five years ago at the young age of 7, Nina was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. There is nothing that Nina could have done to change this outcome because Type 1 Diabetes is an auto immune disease which attacks the insulin producing cells of the pancreas. We are forever grateful for the discovery of insulin in 1922, but dependent on the manufacturers who produce and sell it. Unlike other medications, there are no biosimilar or generic versions of insulin which have made the cost of insulin extremely high, increasing some 1,200% since 1990. In order for our daughter to live a long and healthy life, we must pay the price, or she will die.

We are a farm family who, because we are self-employed, must provide for ourselves an individual health insurance plan. In the past two years, we have paid close to \$40,000 annually in premiums, deductible and co-insurance. Additional basic diabetes supplies that all diabetics must have on hand can cost up to an additional \$500 as needed for test strips, ketone strips, syringes, rescue pens for hypoglycemic events as well as other supportive supplies reaching close to \$1,000 a year and are not covered by insurance.

Type 1 Diabetes is a complex disease. I am proud of the hard work that Nina does to maintain healthy blood sugars. It is not an easy task for anyone let alone a young child who makes life and death decisions each and every day based on their physical activity, their food intake and their insulin needs. She is young and growing so her insulin needs are quite high. An average meal which might consist of a bun, protein, fruit or vegetable of 50 grams of carbs would cost an average of \$10 just to cover her insulin needs for that one meal.

I stand before you today not only as a concerned parent who's child will one day age off of her parents health insurance plan and will have to ask herself if she can afford her life-saving insulin and diabetes supplies, but for the many who are living with this costly life-long disease which can lead to complications of the eye, kidney and heart potentially leading to amputation; or worse, those who have already died because they could not afford to live. It is a strain on our healthcare system, and it is an emotional and physical strain on diabetics and their caregivers. Affordable access to necessary life-saving medicines and supplies that prevent these costly life-long complications should be the standard of care.

I also stand before you today as an active member of my community who wishes for nothing more than to work hard so that I can continue supporting my community and its many nonprofit organizations. I understand the supportive and vital services that these organizations provide to members of our communities all across North Dakota, with many of them financially depending on each and every one of us to sustain their work.

The year 2020 will long be known for the global pandemic of COVID-19. It will also be remembered for the remarkable introduction of a successful vaccine that is expected to cure it. Diabetics have been praying, hoping, begging for a cure for nearly 100 years since the discovery of insulin and yet are they

are still dying every single day because they cannot afford to pay for it. They are dying because they cannot afford the insulin that the supply chain has put on the price of their life as a diabetic and depleting all hope of saving for a future and supporting their communities.

As parents, caregivers and advocates for someone living with diabetes, we may grow weary from telling our story, but we will never give up the fight. I hope North Dakota is willing to come to the table as other states have for meaningful discussions and answer this single question. I am asking you today – what is it that you choose for my daughter and for the thousands of North Dakotans who have been forced to pay the price of a disease they did not choose? I hope it is life.

Thank you for your time.