

Testimony
House Bill 1050
House Human Services Committee
Representative Robin Weisz, Chairman
January 4, 2023

Chairman Weisz, and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am James Knopik, Manager of Addiction and Prevention Program and Policy with the Department of Health and Human Services (Department), Behavioral Health Division. I appear before you in support of House Bill No. 1050, which was introduced at the request of the Department.

The Behavioral Health Division is responsible for the regulation of addiction treatment programs as prescribed by North Dakota Century Code Chapter 50-31.

The proposed changes on page 1 lines 9, 13, 14, 18, and 20 and page 2 lines 2 and 24 of this Bill amend chapter 50-31 of the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) regarding regulation of addiction treatment programs. These changes update language to align to the most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders which modified the term "substance abuse" to the updated term substance use disorder. These language changes will ensure the North Dakota Century Code reflects current terminology recognized in the field of behavioral health.

The proposed change on page 2 line 9 of this Bill amends section 50-31-05 of the North Dakota Century Code to allow the Department to communicate to providers via email in the event it is necessary to suspend or revoke a program license to protect the health and safety of

individuals served by the program. Currently, if a program is out of compliance with state law in an egregious manner that threatens the health and safety of individuals served by the program the Department must notify the program of a suspension or revocation of their license via registered mail. This process may result in the program continuing to serve individuals until the program receives the registered mail, placing more individuals at risk of harm during that time. Allowing the Department to communicate that a program's license has been suspended or revoked by means of electronic mail will allow the Department to respond to health and safety concerns faster and will result in additional protection for individuals who are receiving treatment for a substance use disorder in the state.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to try to answer any questions the committee may have. Thank you.