

**Testimony – ND House Human Services Committee
SB2153
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Theresa Will, RN, Administrator/Executive Officer
City-County Health District-Valley City**

Good morning, Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee.

My name is Theresa Will. I am the Administrator at City-County Health District (CCHD) in Valley City. Our agency provides public health services for the citizens of Barnes County.

Many years ago (in 2001 I believe), it was determined that all land in North Dakota would be in a public health unit. At that time, there was much to be learned about public health, which may have been the reason that core functions were not included in century code at that time.

Local Public Health (LPH) works closely with community partners, such as hospitals and clinics to complete Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA). Critical Access Hospitals are required, by law, to complete a CHNA every 3 years. In Barnes County CCHD works jointly with CHI Mercy Hospital to complete this assessment which involves surveying community members and looking at local data, then determining local gaps and needs. A Community Health Improvement plan based upon the assessment, is put in place and shared widely throughout the community. Availability of mental health services, youth drug use/abuse, youth depression/anxiety and not enough jobs with livable wages were noted in our 2021 CHNA.

Although public health continues to evolve and change as the science supports change, there are specific functions that should be required of each local public health unit. Providing the core functions listed within this bill, assures the public that every citizen will have access to a set of base services. All local public health units currently provide these core services and then augment those services to serve their communities most appropriately.