



North Dakota House of Representatives

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COMMITTEES:
Appropriations

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House Industry, Business, and Labor Committee
North Dakota State Capitol Building, Room 327C
RE: HB 1327 – Veterans Home and IT Services

Chairman Louser and Members of the House IBL Committee,

My name is Corey Mock and I'm here today as a Representative from District 18 in Grand Forks, ND and sponsor of HB 1327.

This legislation is three small changes that will reverse a well-intentioned but unnecessary addition to laws governing state IT services and policies. I'll give a brief history of the law then walk through the bill.

North Dakota created the Information Technology Department (ITD) in 1999¹ for the purpose of centralizing state IT planning, procurement, administration, support, and policy management. Our Legislative IT Committee continued to study and make policy recommendations as our understanding matured and technology evolved.

In 2003, the legislative assembly required most executive branch agencies to use ITD for email, file, print, and application server services, database management, and webhosting.² Following a veto by then-Governor John Hoeven, the legislature allowed some agencies to remain exempt from centralized services and created a process to administratively exempt entities as needed in the future.³

¹ www.ndlegis.gov – Authorized with passage of SB 2043 (1999 legislative session)

² www.ndlegis.gov – NDCC 54-59-22 created with passage of HB 1505 (2003 special legislative session)

³ www.ndlegis.gov – HB 1022 passed during 2003 legislative session, but was vetoed on May 5, 2003

Agencies originally exempted from ITD hosted services were:

- Legislative Branch
- Judicial Branch
- ND University System
- PERS
- RIO
- Attorney General
- Any other entity exempted by OMB as advised by ITD

PERS and RIO were removed from the exempted list in 2013 following investments in our state data center. The Attorney General's office remained an exempted agency while federal evidentiary standards were reviewed; no additional changes emerged following the 2013-15 interim.

North Dakota Veterans Home (located in Lisbon, ND) expressed interest in procuring their own IT services from local vendors during the 2021 legislative session. Unfamiliar with this history and nuance, the Veterans Home was added as an exempt agency within § 54-59-05 and 54-59-22 during the appropriations process. While ultimately not necessary, the amendment remained in the bill to give Veterans Home broad latitude as they explored IT service options.

Ultimately, service providers remained unchanged.

HB 1327 reverses the unnecessary and unintended modifications from the 2021 session. Changes on **page 1 line 11** and **page 4 line 28** restore the Veterans Home as an executive agency under the supervision and guidance of ITD.

Section 2 removes Veterans Home from the exempt list for ITD server and database administration. Current law allows ITD (via OMB) to administratively exempt an agency from services, should that ever be necessary.

Uniform IT standards for all users are a critical part of our state's network security. Reversing these modifications is the next and final step in ensuring our network integrity well into the future.

Thank you for your work and consideration.