

TESTIMONY OF

Lt. Adam Dvorak, Assistant Operations Commander, ND Highway Patrol

Good morning, Chairman Larson and members of the House Judiciary Committee. My name is Adam Dvorak, and I am the Assistant Operations Commander with the North Dakota Highway Patrol. I am here to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1388.

I have been employed by the North Dakota Highway Patrol for approximately 21 years. For all but 2 of those years, I have been involved with the North Dakota Highway Patrol's canine program in some capacity. I was a canine handler for 11 years and was assigned both a narcotics detector canine and a man-trailing bloodhound in my tenure.

The North Dakota Highway Patrol has had a canine program for approximately 30 years. Since 1992, our agency has had approximately 35 police canines who wore the badge and served the citizens of our state. Sadly, due to the relatively short lifespan of dogs, the NDHP only has 3 dogs who have retired and are still alive.

When those dogs retire, they are most often adopted by the troopers who partnered with them. As many of you know, those animals come with a financial burden. House Bill 1388 proposes up to \$1,000 in reimbursement per year for those retired animals to help pay for medical bills, food, and other essential needs. Although \$1,000 a year will not nearly cover the expenses of caring for a retired police K9, it will lessen the burden experienced by those families who continue to care for the dogs who served our citizens and helped keep North Dakota safe and secure.

Some facts about the NDHP canine program are below:

NDHP Canine Program:

- K9 program since 1992.
- 35 dogs total have served as NDHP K9s.
- 9 dogs are currently working.
- Only 3 dogs are actively retired and still living.
- Average years of service for NDHP K9 is 6 years.
- Average lifespan of NDHP K9 is 11 years.
- Average age of NDHP K9 when acquired is 2 years old.
- Average length of retirement is 3 years.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.