



STARK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

66 WEST MUSEUM DRIVE | PO BOX 130 | DICKINSON, NORTH DAKOTA 58601-0130

TELEPHONE 701.456.7610 | FACSIMILE 701.456.7692

SHERIFF COREY LEE

HB 1428 K-9 STATE STANDARD CERTIFICATION

CHAIR / MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

I'M STARK COUNTY SHERIFF COREY LEE AND I AM HERE IN SUPPORT OF HB 1428.

THIS BILL MAY SEEM A LITTLE FOREIGN TO SOME OF YOU BUT TO THOSE OF US IN THE K-9 INDUSTRY, THOSE OF US WHO HAVE OPERATED, TRAINED, AND CERTIFIED HUNDREDS OF K-9 TEAMS IN ADDITION TO OUR OWN, IT REALLY MAKES PERFECT SENSE.

I PERSONALLY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE K-9 INDUSTRY SINCE JANUARY OF 2007 WHEN I BEGAN WITH MY FIRST K-9 PARTNER. MY K-9 HANDLING CAREER ENDED IN 2020 HOWEVER I STILL CONTINUE TO HELP TRAIN AND CERTIFY TEAMS INCLUDING THE THREE K-9 TEAMS WITHIN OUR DEPARTMENT.

DURING MY CAREER I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO WORK WITH TWO SEPARATE K-9'S WITH A GOOD DEAL OF THAT TIME BEING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OIL BOOM AND IN OIL BOOM COUNTRY. YOU CAN ABOUT IMAGINE THE VARIETY OF CALLS WE WERE EXPOSED TO AND THE EXPERIENCE WE GAINED DURING THOSE YEARS.



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YOU MAY ASK WHY IMPLIMENT A STATE STANDARD CERTIFICATION?

WITHOUT A STATE STANDARD, I COULD CURRENTLY TAKE MY HUNTING DOG, CLAIM IT'S TRAINED FOR NARCOTIC DETECTION, AND HEAD OUT ON THE STREET AND BEGIN USING IT CIRCUMVENT THE 4TH AMENDMENT ON TRAFFIC STOPS AND IN OTHER SCENARIOS.

ON AN EVEN MORE FRIGHTENING NOTE, I COULD TAKE MY GERMAN SHEPHERD OUT OF THE BACKYARD, TRAIN IT TO BITE PEOPLE, THEN THROW IT IN THE BACK OF MY SQUAD CAR AND CLAIM IT'S A POLICE APPREHENSION DOG.

ADMITTEDLY THERE IS NOT A HUGE PROBLEM WITH THIS CURRENTLY IN THE STATE BUT THERE ARE KNOWN INSTANCES OF TEAMS OPERATING OUTSIDE OF THEIR CERTIFICATIONS OR WITHOUT HOLDING A LEGITIMATE AND CURRENT CERTIFICATION AND UNFORTUNATELY THIS CAN CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ISSUES WITH OUR INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE, ESPECIALLY IN THE REALM OF CASE LAW BOTH WITHIN OUR STATE AS WELL AS IN THE 8TH CIRCUIT.



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WITH THAT IN MIND HB 1428 IS A HOUSEKEEPING BILL THAT ESSENTIALLY HOLDS OUR K-9 TEAMS ACCOUNTABLE AT A STATE LEVEL. ACCOUNTABLE TO THEMSELVES, TO THEIR ADMINISTRATIONS, AND TO THOSE THAT THEY ARE SWORN TO PROTECT.

THIS RAISED ACCOUNTABILITY CAN AND LIKELY WILL HELP ELIMINATE COSTLY LITIGATION TO THE CITIES, COUNTIES, AND THE STATE. IT WILL HELP PROTECT US FROM POOR CASE LAW, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY IT HELP PROTECT OUR CITIZENS FROM UNREASONABLE AND ILLEGAL SEARCH AND SEIZURE SITUATIONS, TO INCLUDE UNREASOANBLE USES OF FORCE.

UNDER THIS BILL ALL OF THE K-9 TEAMS MAY STILL CERTIFY WITH ANY AND ALL OF THE CURRENT OR FUTURE VENDORS THAT THEY WISH TO USE, BUT THEY MUST ALSO CERTIFY AND EXHIBIT THEIR MINIMUM PROFICIENCY TO A STATE BOARD THAT IS RECOGNIZED BY THE NORTH DAKOTA ATTORNEY GENERALS OFFICE.

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IN ADDITION TO MY TIME AS A HANDLER, I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO AND I CONTINUE TO SPEND TIME AS A CERTIFYING OFFICIAL FOR MULTIPLE CERTIFYING ENTITIES THAT PROVIDE NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED K-9 TEAM CERTIFICATIONS.

DURING MY TIME IN THIS INDUSTRY I HAVE BOTH WITNESSED AND TESTED A VARIETY OF K-9 TEAMS, BOTH GOOD AND BAD. THIS BILL FOCUSES ON BOTH THE GOOD AND THE BAD AS IT PREVENTS THE TEAMS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY OPERATING IN A SUBSTANDARD FASHION FROM ADVERSLY AFFECTING THE TEAMS THAT ARE PUTTING IN THE TIME AND THE HARD WORK, IN AN ATTEMPT TO DO THINGS CORRECTLY AND ACCORDING TO THE STANDARDS OF OUR INDUSTRY.

AS IT STANDS TODAY, THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA DOES NOT HAVE A STANDARD IN REGARD TO THE USAGE OF THE POLICE K-9 TEAM. MANY OTHER STATES INCLUDING SOUTH DAKOTA, COLORADO, ARIZONA, FLORIDA, AND OTHERS CURRENTLY DO REQUIRE A STATE STANDARD.



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AS I FINISH UP HERE I WOULD ASK YOU ALL TO CONSIDER THIS. IN OUR STATE YOU NEED TO BE CERTIFIED OR LICENSED TO BE A BARBER, A BEAUTICIAN, A MASSAGE THERAPIST, AND A NUMBER OF OTHER THINGS. WE ARE SIMPLY ASKING TO DO THE SAME FOR THE K-9 TEAMS AT A STATE LEVEL. WE ARE ASKING THIS TO ASSURE WE ARE ALL PERFORMING TO AT LEAST THE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF OUR PROFESSION.

THIS MINIMUM STANDARD WILL HELP US PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF OUR INDUSTRY, HOLD US ALL THAT MUCH MORE ACCOUNTABLE, AND PROVIDE AN ADDED LAYER OF PROTECTION THAT I KNOW I AS AN ADMINISTRATOR WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE.

THANK YOU!