

2023 Engrossed House Bill No. 1021
Statement of Support of Business Gateway
Presented by: Workforce Safety & Insurance and Job Service North Dakota

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: My name is Krisi Kunz with Workforce Safety & Insurance. I am here today to provide a jointly prepared statement in support of the Business Gateway project on behalf of Workforce Safety & Insurance and Job Service North Dakota.

In our experience, we have noticed a general public perception that all state agencies are regulated and managed as one. Employer stakeholders are frequently surprised when they receive separate information from different state agencies, and commonly confuse one agency for another.

Stakeholders often communicate to us that they feel there is a very large disconnect from one state agency to another, as well as significant duplication of compliance information. Some examples include the following:

Businesses operating in the state of North Dakota are required to complete annual and or quarterly filings with multiple agencies. Contained within these filings are the mailing address, contacts, registered agent and corporation officers, members, or partners. This information is secured by each agency in varying formats leaving the business owner responsible for understanding each agency's needs and wants. This often leads to confusion, frustrations, and missing or incomplete filings.

A business owner's primary focus is the economic growth and prosperity of the business in order to thrive within his or her community. When state agencies duplicate compliance regulations and reporting requirements, we divert the owner's attention away from this primary focus. This can include requesting payroll reporting, account auditing, written notifications, liability determinations, and invoicing for payment.

In addition, a common complaint from our business stakeholders is too many usernames and passwords are required for interacting with state agencies. This leads to the inevitable frustration of having to guess which one to use, and ultimately to the accidental locking of accounts and password resets. Recent market research of North Dakota businesses indicated 64% of those surveyed asked for a single sign-on experience for interactions with all state agencies.

The request for a single sign-on experience, coupled with 65% of surveyed businesses indicating a desire for centralized reminders and additional notifications of upcoming deadlines, is the foundation we intend on creating with the North Dakota Business Gateway. It is time we take the next step forward in reducing the burden on businesses and citizens of North Dakota. The first steps of the Business Gateway include simplifying access to state agency services through a single sign-on experience, as well as laying the foundation for both desktop and mobile device friendly functionality, and additional notifications.

Continued support for the Business Gateway will create a reality where data sharing and further simplification of interactions with state agencies will become the norm. The Business Gateway provides opportunities for future enhancements that will provide further benefits to employers. Potential benefits, for example, include automatic referrals of candidates seeking work who match location and skillsets with the employer; simplified reporting and single source payments;

collaboration between agencies; and increasing efficiencies while enhancing the employer's experience.

As we continue to work as one on the Business Gateway, we have the opportunity to streamline business interactions with state government, ensuring increased compliance and positive interactions for our stakeholders.